I Have YOUR APA Tech 18 Cover A Friend

APA-TECH 10010B (#18) APRIL 1982 The 555 Times #18

The Amateur Press Association for and by
the members of General Technics

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PAGE COUNT 47

The next deadline is Thursday, June 10 !!!!!!

The copy count is 35 Minac is two pages every other mailing

YOUR ACCOUNT BEFORE POSTAGE IS $ 4.88

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MEMO FROM EVITA

RE: APA-TECH HAS MOVED

The headquarters of Apa-tech have been moved. Across the street. Be notified that all contributions, monies, harrauning letters should now be addressed to 525 W. Walnut St. Not 530 W. Walnut St. It is felt by the Board that this is an important and necessary relocation and, after the initial setting up period, will greatly facilitate the compilation and distribution of our apa. Unfortunately, there have been a few minor setbacks. Mostly, that relocation has interferred with the collation of this issue. Also the Company has lost use of a ditto machine. Therefore people that want ditto services should contact Dick Smith on the availabilty of his services. We hope and trust that this move will not inconvenience you and you will support us in this endeavor.

RE: RUMOURS OF A COUP

It has come to our attention that there has been some dissatisfaction and talk of change amongst our stockholders. Specifically, there have been worries that the apa is too late in being sent out and will continue to do so. The solution brought forward has been to change the leadership of this company. We respect those concerns. However, the members should try to respect the difficulty of assembling an apa. Feel free to consult with those of your fellow stockholders who have had experience in this matter. It is more than just collation. There is the time spent waiting for the zines to come in and calling people to ask about their contributions. Some people have mentioned that a deadline should be selected (one has, the 10th of every other month) and rigidly enforced. We here on the Board are leniently disposed towards procrastination and try to allow some (but only some) time for the members to send us their zines. There is the keeping of records. The 555 Times must be written. There is the collation. Finally, there are numerous small details which must be attended to each issue. It is a time-consuming job; one that receives little praise and much grief. It is a labour of love. The worry, however, is a legitimate one and we will attempt to assuage it. We don't want to make unrealistic claims, so we will say that each succeeding apa will come out earlier than the one before until the distribution date is one week from the deadline. We hope that you will be patient with us.

About the change in leadership. We now make the suggestion that the GTB-ship rotate between myself, Shalmaneser, and Inigo Montoya. It would be an irregular schedule so that any one would have the apa when we had the most time. We would, of course, notify you, the stockholders, far in advance as to the location of the collation center. We await your comments on this matter.

The suggestion has been made that the home of the GTB-ship should be changed permanently to that of Chicago. We are opposed to that move. First, if the areas where stockholders live are divided into into three groups, those living in Chicago and the surrounding areas, those living in Kalamazoo and the surrounding areas, and those living outside both, the membership would be fairly evenly divided among those three areas. Which means that roughly two-thirds of the stockholders live outside Chicago. We have always strived to make this an apa of Gt'ers, not just Chicago GT'ers. Indeed, this was stated in the first 555 Times. We felt that Gt'ers outside of the Chicago area were missing most of what brought the group together. We wanted to provide a forum for those in and outside of Chicago to be brought together and be feel more a part of GT. A move to Chicago would violate this precept. Again, we await your comments on this matter.

RE: COVERS

As you can see we are in a crisis situation here. We need covers desperately. Each one of you should try to work up a cover and send it to me. You may either put an issue number on it or not. You are all very talented people. Please send some of that talent to me in the form of covers. Thank-you.

TRANSPORTER TOPICS

(15)

Rodford E. Smith
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Its no Fun Being Sick

On the other hand the past week has given me a chance to do some catching up on my reading. My normal strategy for getting well is to go home, lie down and sleep for a couple of days, but this flu bug that's going around the central Ky. area is very stubborn. I'm okay now, as evidenced by the fact that this is being typed.

Cover

Loved it! Who is Dexter Dickinson?

The National Noid

Uh, nice, Kip. I'm glad to see that today's modern institutions are letting their patients indulge in creative activities.

Compressed Verbiage

To avoid your problem of finding the hotel at Windycon when the Worldcon rolls around in a few months, why don't you, I and a few other out-of-town members ~~[illegible]~~ persuade those lucky enough to live in and around Chicago to create map and directions on how to get there? This would be somewhat more practical than a restaurant guide. Do you have to pay for tha parking 'service'? Are you expected to tip the driver who removes and delivers your precious vehicle? That sort of thing. Your vewing of The Handicapped reminds me of a film I saw in Florida a couple of months ago (Febuary) at Omnicon. It was a production of Clarke's Rescue Mission. I got in on it late, so I don't know who did it or when, but it was very faithful to the original. Low budget but good.

As for as I know, "Iceteroids" is my invention, but I may have read the term somewhere.

Your observationabout the Cray 1 made me think of some other classics of technology. For instanae, the SR71 is still the fastest air-breathing craft ever built, even after nearly 20 years. I'm sure that other members can think of further examples.

I once came up with a Known Space story that concerned one of the last ramscoop probes launched from Earth. Two hundred years later it is approaching a world that has since been colonised by FTL travel. The problem is that the council in charge want to salvage the thing for the components and as a tourist attraction, but that it was programmed to continue its mission despite any obstacles in its way. Do you have any idea what a ramscoop field could do to a planet's magnetoshpere? An old, retired technician, who worked on the probe project as a young man, tries to warn the council of the danger, to no avail. Unfortunately, I later realised that I had seen this story before: on Spase 1999, Voyager's Return.

Rabbit Runes

Nuclear power is another of those great ideas that cost too much to make work properly with today's technology.

Renovated Title

Having grown up in a small town and never having lived in a city of

more than 25000 population, I share your feelings about large metropolises. About Jittlov: at Omnicon he had sceenes from the parade episode, both as will be seen in the movie (hundreds of people milling around this central group, cheering Mike), and from a more distant viewpoint (the 'hundreds' of people are about two dozen, hoisting Mike on their shoulders and dnacing down the street while the spectators left from the parade are standing or walking around, grinning and waving, not realising that this in not part of the parade). There is a more recent version of "Turn your Radio On" that was popular around here a few years ago.

Egg-'er On

I am sorry to hear that you have decided to quit (and hope that you are reading this in Doug's copy). I have never found your prescense inhibiting, either in the zine or in real life. Of course, if Doug stays in you can still include an occasional comment with his contribution; this would give you the best of both worlds. Here's hoping that you will still keep in touch.

Space For Rent

A cheaper form of VOIR is being planned. It would use an eliptical orbit instead of a circular one, needing less fuel and onboard gadgets. This will fly a reduced capability mission, but manily in the form of taking longer to get the job done. Since most spacecraft outlive thier expectd span by quite a margin we should still be able to accurately map Venus. Maybe.

Singing Bear

Your drawing of the VW beetle looks like Alfred Hitchcock lying down. (How many other members here are old enough to remember that show from when it was originally on?) Your explanation of Aihok and Effex make me wonder how many other creations, both vilsual and literary, are projections of the artist's personality as he sees them. Personally, I have created a pair of adventurers who represent exagerated versions of different faces of my personality. All is vanity.

Officer Earthquake

(Has someone used this? It sounds familiar.) Raybnic. (What do you expect when you minac?) (Just kidding, Jeff!)

Mourning Perspectives

This sounds soooo familiar. I commuted thirty-odd miles to University of Kentucky for five years, and am also a late riser. Well, good luck. I have found that it helps if you have a clock radio set to Morning Edition or something similar. Quiet voices are much better to wake up to that the strident buzzing/beeping/ringing of a traditional alarm. The whole day seems to go better.

Diesel Do Corona

Remember those diagrams of engines in highschool science books? Personally, I think turbines are much simpler. That last picture looks like the time we replaced the water pump on my sister's Ford Lincoln. There were several parts left over. The car ran fine, so we just threw them in the trunk.

Extrapolated Extravaganzas

The more tales you people tell about the horrors of your local climate the more I am glad to live in Kentucky. Unfortunately, the move to an apartment has been postponed due to family problems. For mysteries loaded with characterization and fun puzzles try Dorothy Sayres' Lord Peter novels and short stories.

MUBETAN

Someday I'm going to make an Ishercon. →

Mu Betan (cont.)

I think that one reason for the lack of spectacular projects in GT nowadays is that this sort of thing quickly leads to one-upsmanship.

Harmonic Coefficients

Nice cover, Bill, except that your beard didn't come out. Or have you shaved it off? (Perish forbid!)

Why not combine a hovercraft with a hydorfoil? The air cushion would provide lift while the foil would give stability and directionality, as well as being a good place to put a propeller. Maybe an extendable, knife-edge keel would work better. A compromise.

On height vs. velocity: actually, that is the point I was trying to make---I hope. Maybe I'd better re-read that.

Bad Feeling

Welcome, Clif (only one 'f'?). Howcum your zine was on the back of Bill H.'s last page?

Amidst Confusion

Nice, liked the clock with a latter-day uhh---(what was that guy's name? completely slipped my mind!).

YAAITSS

For those who may still not have sent in their Hugo nominations ~~yourself/late~~ I believe that there has been an extension, since a computer mixup has meant that some people have yet (early April) to recieve their nominations. For best novel, I would like to suggest The Seven Alters of Dusara, by Lawrence Watt-Evans. Lawrence lives just thirty miles from here, in Lexington, and this is his second novel. It was published by Del Rey Books. For non-fiction I would recommend Lucy: the Beginnings of Humankind. I don't have the book here, so I can't tell you the author and may not have the title exactly right. Look for it. It's good.

On ths Shuttle, I have

3

Firm Sets Down-Payment For Buy of Space Shuttle

By Craig Covault

Washington—Space Transportation Co. is prepared to provide the National Aeronautics and Space Administration $200-300 million by early 1983 for transfer to Rockwell International as the initial down-payment on a $1-billion investment to finance privately construction of the fifth shuttle orbiter.

The company will present a formal proposal to NASA and the Reagan Administration within the next two to six months and it expects approval will be granted soon. The company will then begin marketing the space transportation system to commercial and foreign users in late 1982 or 1983.

Banking Subsidiary

Space Transportation Co. is the subsidiary of a large U.S. investment banking firm, William Sword, Inc. The venture to procure the fifth orbiter has strong backing in the investment banking community (AWAST Jan. 4, p. 23). The company's proposal to the federal government will consist of:

- **Marketing**—In return for its investment the company wants to take over from NASA all marketing of space transportation system launch services to commercial and foreign users. The company envisions selling shuttle payload space in the same manner Arianespace markets European Ariane launch services. By providing funding for the fifth orbiter, the firm would create for itself a financial risk recoverable by sales of shuttle capacity to commercial and foreign users. "To make the marketing people hustle the system aggressively, we must have financial risk involved," according to Klaus Heiss, company president and chairman of the board of Econ. That organization's cost/benefit analysis helped lay the groundwork for shuttle justification in the early 1970s. NASA's marketing structure does not have the financial risks or capabilities to be efficient in the commercial market, he said.
- **Orbiter use**—In exchange for the funding and commercial/foreign marketing responsibility, the fifth shuttle orbiter would be operated as a normal part of the shuttle fleet without restriction or costs charged to the government for its use. The prices charged commercial and foreign users would follow the current user policy of NASA or any shuttle operations organization that might evolve from shuttle operations.
- **Cost reimbursement**—In return for financing the fifth orbiter and conducting more aggressive worldwide marketing of the shuttle system, the company would reimburse NASA, or the designated operator of the shuttle system, for all direct costs required to launch commercial and foreign payloads. Fixed costs would remain the responsibility of NASA. Under this concept, external tanks and solid rocket boosters would be paid for by the company for the appropriate launch support of commercial and foreign payloads. Routine non-flight activities to maintain the pads at Kennedy Space Center, for example, would not be the company's responsibility. This approach is already in practice between Defense Dept. and NASA for Defense Dept. launches, Heiss said. The company holds that since it would be providing about $1 billion to national shuttle operations, commercial and foreign users should receive equal treatment. The company believes the NASA/Defense Dept. cost split is about 50:50. Based on an approximate $60-million total cost per flight in 1982 dollars, NASA would receive $30 million from the company for each full commercial or foreign mission.
- **Capacity**—The company says that projections for the 1980s and 1990s show commercial and foreign users will make up about 20% of the total shuttle-user market, roughly equivalent to the 20% of capacity that would be provided by the privately financed fifth orbiter of a five-vehicle fleet. The company proposal envisions that at the end of each year an accounting be made of the amount of space transportation system capacity provided by the fifth orbiter as compared with the amount of commercial and foreign traffic flown by the entire orbiter fleet. The company proposes that if the orbiter has provided more capacity through missions than there was commercial and foreign traffic, NASA would reimburse the company for that extra capacity. If more traffic in commercial and foreign launches was flown than the fifth orbiter capacity, the company would reimburse NASA. The company expects the latter would occur since this would help fulfill return on investment and indicate the marketing was effective.
- **No guarantees**—The company is not seeking any government guarantees on its return on investment. It does expect commercial and foreign users to be given equal priority in mission scheduling with civil U.S. government payloads.
- **Defense missions**—The company wants no restrictions placed on defense priorities over shuttle scheduling. In order for private financing to be approved, the company needs political support from defense interests and is willing to submit to any defense requirements.
- **Aerospace corporate involvement**—Heiss stresses that the company's concept is strictly a financial arrangement and one that will not accept a large aerospace company as a financing partner. Heiss is concerned that if one of the main aerospace contractors were to become involved as a direct funding party, concerns could be raised about such a company cornering and taking over key elements of shuttle capability. It is possible aerospace companies could be involved in the marketing effort for shuttle payloads, however. Boeing has studied the concept of private financing of a shuttle orbiter, and Boeing and the Space Transportation Co. have shared substantial data. "We think if you want to see a timely agreement to fund a fifth orbiter, a very important ingredient is to stay away from choosing any particular aerospace company as a backer or promoter of the idea," Heiss said.
- **Financing**—Heiss said some of the nation's leading investment banking organizations are ready to support the procurement if the government will agree to the basic elements of the company proposal. In addition, the company has assembled a board of directors drawn from large investment firms. The members already have been involved in financing projects exceeding $1 billion, such as oil and gas pipelines.

Initially, Space Transportation Co. is interested only in financing the fifth orbiter, but if the concept is approved this year the company will examine financing other key elements of the system such as the fabrication of Martin Marietta external tanks. It also will examine the potential for private financing of orbiters beyond the fifth vehicle.

If the preferred proposal is not accepted, the company would consider other options that it believes do not have as clear an advantage to the company or space transportation system.

One such option is a lease arrangement where the orbiter would be privately financed and then leased to NASA. Heiss does not believe this would promote commercial involvement in shuttle as well as the initial proposal. The company would still want to maintain a strong marketing involvement under a lease arrangement, according to Thomas Huntington, a company director and former vice president of Trans World Airlines.

Return on Investment

"If we are told to go the lease route, the marketing responsibility would be at a lesser level because we would get some recovery on investment out of the lease," he said.

"We still believe very strongly that the viability of this is dependent on private marketing, and we want to see private marketing develop no matter what," Huntington said.

Another option is to adopt a half-lease, with the other half of the investment recovered through sales of payloads to the commercial and foreign sector. This would be a half-lease/half-risk recovery route.

If the company is able to obtain approval on the concept this summer, it will begin in mid to late 1982 to formulate a functional marketing structure worldwide. Heiss believes it is possible a group of NASA operations managers could be based at the company to help transition from NASA to company marketing. □

Aviation Week & Space Technology, January 18, 1982

French Arms Sales

Paris—France's decision to supply the Sandinista government of Nicaragua with military equipment and training services is part of the Socialist government's evolving foreign policy.

Government officials said the military equipment—including two Aerospatiale Alouette 3 helicopters—would be used for defensive purposes, and they said the sale is in line with President Francois Mitterrand's policy to reduce the influence of Communist arms in developing countries.

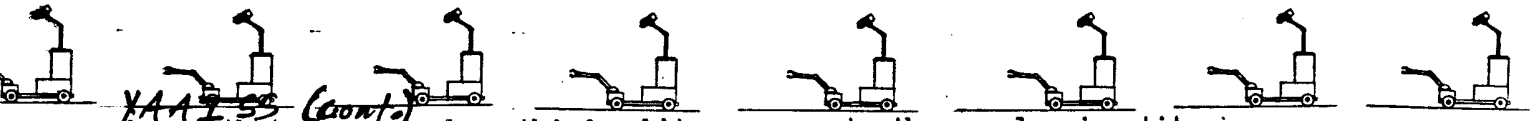
The contract was estimated at about $17.5 million and covered the helicopters, trucks, naval vessels and the training of Nicaraguan pilots.

French government officials said France has insisted the equipment be limited to defense purposes and the arms not be reexported.

U.S. Defense Secretary Caspar W. Weinberger said the Reagan Administration was disappointed at the French sale. The matter was discussed when French Foreign Minister Claude Cheysson met with U.S. Secretary of State Alexander M. Haig, Jr., during a NATO conference in Brussels last week.

Westinghouse has successfully demonstrated an electromagnetic launcher, known as the railgun, firing a projectile at 13,780 fps. velocity, twice the velocity of conventional munitions. The company has fired the device four times at its Pittsburgh development center in tests that range in electrical power from 500,000 amp. to 2.1 million amp. The railgun will be moved to Picatinny Arsenal, N. J., where ballistic tests will resume in August. The Navy is expressing interest in the railgun for shipboard air defense applications. The Westinghouse work was done under a Defense Advanced Research Projects Agency contract administered by the Army.

A ... Hughes AH-64 advanced attack helicopter production decision by the



XAAZSS (cont.)

heard that the second or third orbiter may go to the overlapping titanium plates to repace the troublesome tiles.

Any beam powerfull enough to kill rapidly will leave a definite trail through the body and anything else it passes through, even window galss. This would be easier to trace than a bullett since the beam would not bounce off heavy bone and fragment and tumble.

The beam at checkout counters flys through a rapid scan pattern and shuts off in about a second. The light is actually shining in the eye for only a fraction of that time. And who would have thought ten years ago that we would someday have lasers in grocery stores?

Jerry-built Zine

That's an interesting test, Jerry. Have you ever seen the Langdon Adult Intelligence Test (LAIT)?

Meromorphic Melange

Yeah, you and I, plus the other interested kibitzers, are going to have to get together at some con and discuss the air launch verses verticle launch matter, It is too easy to misinterpret something said in print. I'm not saying that you are wrong, just that there must be some advantage or so many people would not have suggested this method.

The 8th Orbital

When I give Tarot readings I usually have the subject think the question without vocalising. That makes the answer more impressive. If the asker is someone you know you can often guess the question, which is even more impressive. It works.

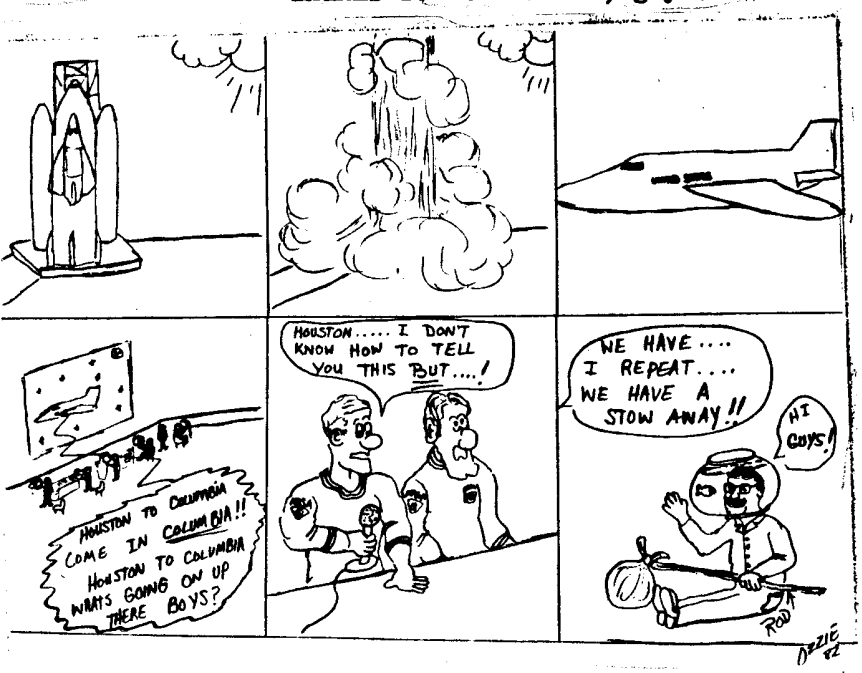
I have been a medis fan for years. Worse, I actually like Perry Rhodan! With restraint (on both sides) we can be tolerated.

101 Ways

Your game sounds like fun. There are three "superhero" games the local group plays that are sometimes similar, Superhero 2044, Villians and Vigilantes, and a new one, Champions. Usually we follow the rules and roll our own, but sometimes we will create characters based on existing or past comic book heroes. Also, most DMs will use non-player characters based on favorite fictional people.This is more for fun than serious gaming.

Greg Ruffa and Mike Sestak

Thanks for the cards, guys. I'm a little late on Greg's because I misplaced it.



Pyro #30

Chuck's little talk on Heinlein's oddball references is an interesting coincidence, since I had planned to comment on such bits here, this time. I call them throwaway pieces, because they are not important to the plot but tend more to help characterization and general flavor. They are also a lot of fun! In the novella I am working on, for instance, half the ships are named after songs while the other half are named after golden age comic book characters or something associated with them. Sometimes, though, what seem to be deliberately obscure references are not, really, at least not →

when the story was written. Rocketship Galleleo was published in the fifties, and contains references to Nazies (as well as Nazies themselves) and also a German radio propagandist named Lord Hawhaw. The only reason that I have even a vague notion of who he was is because I am a war buff. Dorothy Sayres' Lord Peter stories were all written before the middle of this century, and contain quotes and references to contemporary events and locals that are baffling to people reading the stories today. Fortunately, we can get at least an idea of what is meant by the context of the story itself.

Throwaway bits may be things besides references. They can be ways of phrasing things. Other ways may be adequet, or even good, but the throwaway bits add to the story. "May you be a victim of retroactive birth control" (Niven), any of the sayings from the notebooks of Lazarus Long, by my great uncle Woody. "Never get a time traveller mad at you. You may suddenly find that you never existed!" (mine). Also interesting are the things that seem perfectly innocent unless you happen to know something. To take a well known example, the fact that the characters of Flying Sorcerers are based on people famous in SF and SF fandom. These can be a lot of fun, both for the author and for those who catch on to the inside jokes. It also makes a story easier to write, because instead of thinking how much work you are doing you are thinking of new gags. Unfortunately, these can be overdone, since these do not make a good story, no matter how much fun they are.

ENDENDENDENDENDENDENDENDENDENDENDENDENDENDENDENDENDENDENDENDENDENDENDENDENDEND

I've done it. I promised myself that I would comment on everyting since the last issue, and have. If my remarks sometimes sounded innane and vacant this si why, but at least everyone got their share. Now, I am about typed out. The two cartoons this issue are by special guest artist Ronnie Osborne, a friend from work. The graph on the back page is by Joe Armistead, a programmer and SF fan whom I know, and was drawn on a Calcomp plotter. Farewell untill next time.

OMNICON

I drove all the way to Florida for this, by myself. The original plan was for three or four of the local people to go down in a van, but the van broke and none of the others sent in their memberships. I had a lot of fun but would not do it again. A day and a half to drive down and a day and a half to drive back is just too much concentrated time behind the wheel.

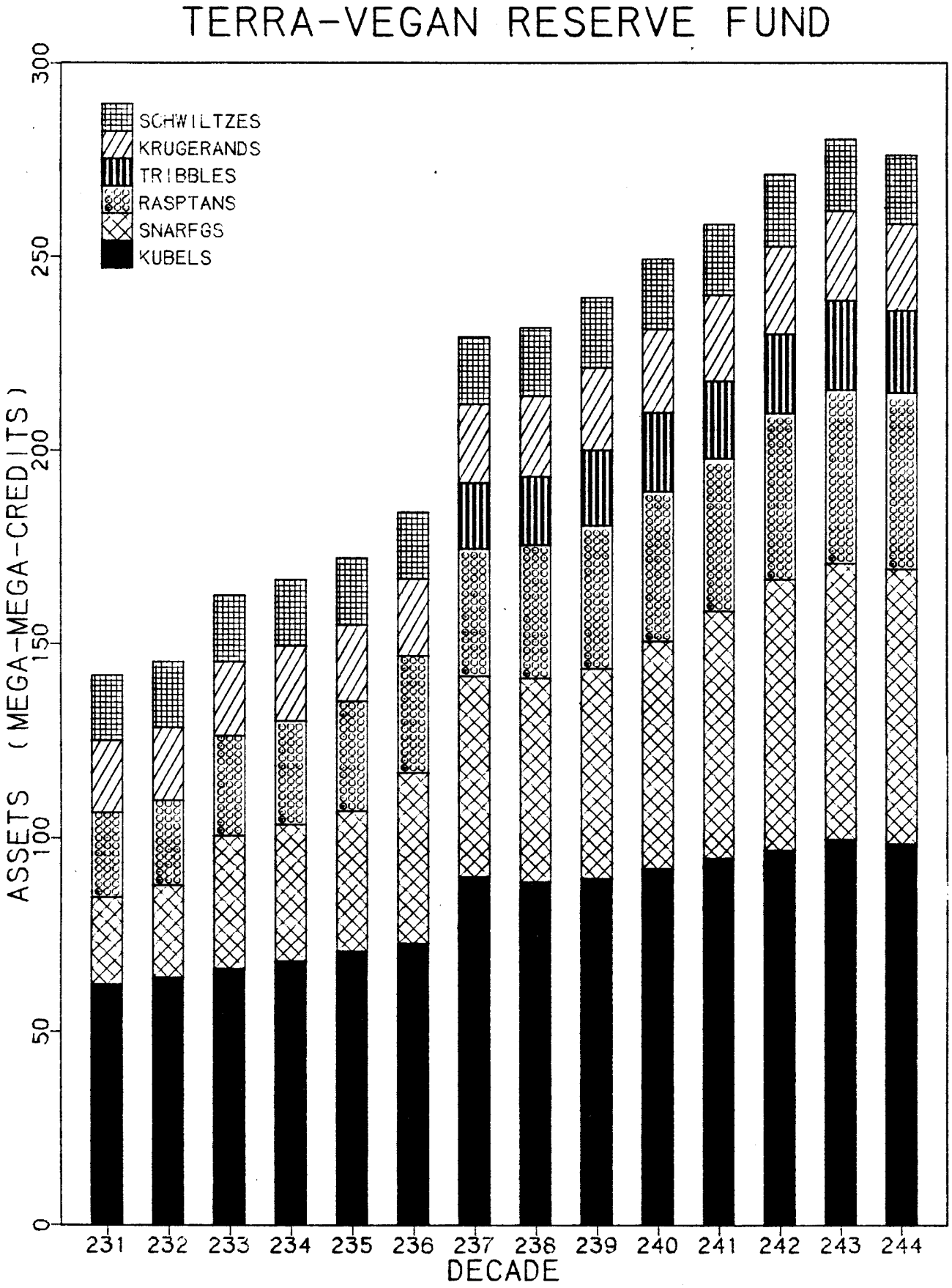
Lets see, I OD'd on Dr. Who, including the first and latest versions; met and talked with C. C. Beck, who looks like Savanna with a wig and fake beard; and talked with Mike Jittlov. Nice time, all together.

Regards
Rod

Explain This one!

Rod "JR" Smith Invests ONE MILLION ON Horse Flesh?
Rod Recently Does what any Self Respecting Ky. Colonel Should do. He aquired 75% of a true Thoroughbred.....
Rod Really made a great deal, Complete with Jockey.
But Alas.. Could this one be a Glue-Factory Reject?

↑ Don't ask me, I don't know what


TERRA-VEGAN RESERVE FUND
SCHWILTZES
KRUGERANDS
TRIBBLES
RASPTANS
SNARFGS
KUBELS
ASSETS (MEGA-MEGA-CREDITS)
0
50
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DECADE

INTO THE SEA OF QUARKS
RODE THE FOUR THOUSAND . . .

wherein your procrastinating, indecisive author decides to chuck the bright lights and people of LA for love, happiness and several painful years of graduate study in that bastion of silliness - Minneapolis.

This issue is brought to you by the particle λ_c, who is charmed I'm sure. By the way, this is Fanchild in the Promised Land #8 produced and misdirected for his own edification by Keith Thorne, 2608 Vanderbilt Lane, Apartment 3 Redondo Beach California 90278. (213) 372-9183.

.....

Much has happened to me in the months since December, 1981. What has been really nice is that for a change everything has been positive. 1980 was a real bummer of a year for me, what with auto accidents (3), flunking my qualifying exam and having to change from academia to the defense industry, not to mention several fizzled and frazzled relationships. 1981 was sort of a frustrating year, with job offers blowing away with the cold winds of Washington and friendships at a distance. I moped, I groped, I hoped for something. Even making an outrageous amount of money at my engineering job didn't help much, in fact it created some pangs of guilt. Of course the IRS helped me out there.

This is how I approached my Christmas vacation. I had a whirlwind tour planned. First Windycon, then home for Christmas, back to Chicago for a few days,then to Kalamazoo and Ishercon, then back to Chi, thence La as I reported earlier. What follows is a tale of those days, days like any others, filled with those events which . . .

WINDYCON

Never really got into the "Windycon" experience at this one. Either the cons are getting duller or I'm getting older, or both. The programming, what little I went to or paid attention to, was pretty ineffective. The trivia contest was abysmally attended, the con com dropped it in the lap of the Boys from Chusfa, again, at the last minute, again. Rolf, Greg and John sure put up with a lot of grief from these turkeys. Mostly hung around with my friends, bending the collective ears of Marty Franz, Bill Higgins and Barry Gehm as I started thrashing about my personal debate about my life and where it should be heading. Thanks guys for putting on with my insistent talk. The bowels of a hotel is no place to put the huckster's rooom and Art Show which were lackluster and unimpressive respectively. The best time I had was at the dead dog party which ran all day and evening. Got to natter on with lots of people on a range of topics. Showing up at Arthur Anderson's in full-up coat-and-tie regalia was fun on Friday evening, as was dinner at Bergoff's with Valli.

MUSEUMCON

Boy did I get suckered into this one. Some GTer's stuck in and around Detroit over Christmas (Valli, myself,Renee, and Marty) decided a day's outing was just the tonic for the cooped-up-in-the-parent's-house blues. Valli allowed as how she thought that the Henry Ford Museum might be fun. Renee preferred Greenfield Village, but acquiesced in light of the weather. So the date was set for the day after Christmas. Little did I know that my abilities of technical deduction would be taxed to the limit.

Renee, Valli, myself, and Valli's mother's roommate's granddaughter arrived in Dearborn that morning, Marty having to bow out to attend to family matters. Everything was fine until we got to the photography exhibit. Innocently, Valli asked those soon to be feared words:"Gee Keith, how does this work?". I was trapped into the role of supposed Master of all Things Technical, bringer of explanations to the unknowing masses. First it was wet and dry plate cameras, thenit was guns, then on to home equipment and appliances. Renee kept remarking how Tullio was worried about what we would do after the apocalypse, how would we remember how to make these things if we had to start from scratch. Somebody must know these things. I drew on vague rememberances and recollections from high school chemistry and physics. They wanted to figure out how everything worked. I fell back on the old method of slowly going over the explanation on the plaque while my mind raced ahead trying to figure out the missing steps. I could have told them everything they could need about sub-atomic particles and computers, but what the hell did I know about a Newcommen steam engine? Here I was, MS in Physics stymied by a walking beam engine. It has to do with steam and creating a partial vacuum by cooling it, but what else? The AC and DC motors, generators, etcetera were another fiasco on my part. Glancing from plaque to plaque, I vainly strived to master the details of the interaction of electric and magnetic fields within a dynamo. Which winding did what and how were they hooked up. Oh for a blackboard and chalk. At least Renee could help out on the machine tools. I have never felt so dumb and embarassed. This was worse than orals. It went on for several hours.

That evening we were going to go to the ever-popular Tunnel Bar-B-Que, meeting Marty and his old MSU buddy on the way. Despite having a Canadian citizen(Renee), and a Canadian studies major(Valli), no one bothered to remember that it was Boxing Day in Canada until we got to the tunnel to Windsor. I did make the observation that the parking lot of the closed restaurant was owned by the Lennut Parking Co.(Spell it backwards). We settled on Greektown. It turned out that comparison of Marty's and Valli's experiences at MSU revealed that she had met both Marty and his friend when they lived at Holmes Hall. Small world. A much more sobering experience was Valli's friend, an undergraduate, felt out of touch with our conservation. We realized right then, with a pang of nostalgia, that we were now between the ages of 25-30 and were"alumni" reminiscing about the good old days. Gad, I felt old!

ISHERCON

If ever there was a relaxed Ishercon this one was it. After much arguement and bruised egos both there and abroad, the Isherites trimmed the roster from the old 45-50 down to a manageable 20+ and shortened it to two(2) days. It was pleasant not fighting over sleeping space. I stayed at the sumptious overflow house (Marty's) across the street, a new Feature of this year's con. Friday was spent shoveling snow, by now a ritual, and renewing old acquaintances. Saturday I joined Marty in his small-town America breakfast at the downtown coffee shop. The afternoon was spent descending in a horde on the local video game palace, StarWorld. I hadn't been in an arcade in quite a while. I saw the expected Pac-Man, Defender and Asteroids, but was unprepared for the new super-graphics of Donkey Kong and Crazy Climber, the intensity of Tempest and others. I do best at the "cockpit" games, especially Red Baron. I loved to make

strafing runs on the ground targets, the ack-ack whizzing by me as I jigged and jagged. A most amazing event was when the group of us sat down at our table for the pizza. Not only were their an equal number of men and women, and rare event in GT circles, but we had managed to sit alternating boy-girl-boy-girl all around. That night some of us tried to learn the swing, wlatz, and others under the careful instructions of Linda Struwe and Bonnie Jones. 1-2-3,1-2-3 1-stumble-shuffle. . . Got to watch all six BBC-TV Hitchiker's episodes straight through. It was amazing what little acrimony occured over the weekend, such a far cry from previous Ishercons. Saw old friends and met some new ones.

GOING FOR THE PHUD

After the holidays, I realized I had done a lot of talking but not taken much action. I resolved to change this. The latter part of January saw me madly calling up physics departments to "please, If you would kindly send me an application", calling up half-forgotten faculty members, and tracking down transcripts and GRE scores. I wasn't going to get back into the study of particle physics unless I applied to grad schools on my own initiative. In my favor in the usual battle for acceptance was a noted increase in ads in "Physics Today" for graduate assistantships, reflecting the continued decrease in the number of physics grad students. So even a young retread like me might have a shot. I pared my list to schools in the area of the Midwest, and ended up with University of Minnesota, University of Wisconsin and Purdue University. As I was up against the ~~will~~ deadlines I aborted on Wisconsin when they spent over two weeks getting me the application. The worst part was composing those 500-word essays about why I wanted to got to graduate school. what an exercise in bullshit. And then came The Wait. I was greatly encouraged when a professor from Minnesota called me up one night to clarify some details about my background. Infact both Purdue and Minnesota accepted me and offered me teaching assistantships!!! (Insert warm huzzahs and applause). After being rejected by my old school and bad luck with job interviews this was a refreshing boon to my ego. Now I had to decide which one. Minnesota had Minneapolis-St. Paul going for it, but was a good distance driving-wise from My parent's place in Flint, Michigan. Purdue was closer to it and Chicago, but was a bit isolated in the heart of the Indiana prarie. Since I had already endured two years of similar surroundings in Champaign-Urbana, Minnesota won out, despite the weather. The next few months will be odd, since I know I will be departing LA, but can't do it until late August-early September. Thus I really shouldn't shut down my social life here just yet, but shouldn't get too ambitious either. Of course I have to move myself all across the country, too. This means renting a U-Haul and either driving or towing my car. To give myself a last-minute bailout option I am using the quite advatageous timing of Minicon to sneak a checkout of the campus.

SHUTTLE SHUFFLINGS.

Now every pinch themselves. Hard. See, the shuttle's still there, that long-awaited pipe dream locked away for so many years in those buildings in Downey is actually doing it to it. No more 747-drop rehearsals, no more static tests, this is it, the real thing. So have you become jaded already? Are things for Shuttle Experience 3 a bit ho-hum? Just think ,

one more test flight in July and it becomes fully operational, with a regular schedule and payloads. An investment consortium wants to pay for a fifth shuttle in a bargain to allow the to schedule the whole shuttle program's commercial flights. We are really going to have our Kenilworth to the stars.

MOOSECON I STATUS

The response to my psuedo-flyer in Apa-Tech 16 was generally positive. Ever willing to give anybody what ever duties they open their mouth about, Mike Bentley, Alice Insley and Al Duester wanted to appoint me acting head of the supposed committee. A major stumbling block to using dormitory facilities for convention housing is that dorm beds tend to be narrow singles. This puts a bit of a crimp in one of the typical con social activites. Of course with the celibacy fad sweeping parts of the country, we might not have a problem. In negotiating with the University, an organizing committee would be best off divorcing themselves from any connection with university-sponsored clubs and approach the whole matter just as any other group that wishes to use the campus facilities for a convention.

BOOK REVIEWS

The Princess Bride by William Goldman
Fear and Loathing in Las Vegas by Hunter S. Thompson

These two books were recommended to me by Marty Franz, so its all his fault. HHOK. the Princess Bride is an abridgement of a much longer work by S. Morgenstern of the same name. Goldman, a novelist and script writer, claims to have heard this tale , but only the good parts, at his father's side while Goldman recuperated from a childhood illness. Billed as"a hot fairy tale", the story tells of the life and times of two star-crossed lovers, Buttercup and Westley, and other assorted characters, such as Inigo "Hello. My name is Inigo Montoya. You killed my father. Prepare to die" Montoya. Goldman has added filler passages, telling why he toook out this or that. As a story, it was predictable in its outcome. The evil got punished, but of course the good had to suffer first. The best parts were the tongue-in-cheek desriptions and sides done in a self-conscious fashion. These are extractions from the entire purpose of Morgenstern's work, which Goldman tells us was actually a biting, if very-longwinded,satire of Florin culture (Florin appears to have been around the Denmark-Germany area. An interesting work, but not great literaturre.

aside The title of this zine refers to the fact that there are about 4000 practicing high-energy physicists around the world *aside*

The Hunter S. Thompson work is, as expected, full-blown drug-crazed pedal-to-the-metal gonzo journalism Having traveled from LA to Las Vegas helps one to attempt to figure out this tale of Thompson and his lawyer's adventures in Vegas. It is a bit hard for an innocent like me to know what is true and what is made-up, but the social commentary between the cocaine lines is great stuff

NEXT... TIME... News... Views... Mailing Comments...

Down to the Sea with Chips:

Violently wrenched free from the confines of his rather limited skull, this is to be the maybe-minac-and-then-some contribution by Al Duester for Apa-Tech 18. The afore mentioned porpoise molester lives at 179 Woods Hole Road, Falmouth, MA 02540 (617) 540-3250, a stone's throw (if you happen to be able to throw a stone 3 kilometers) from Woods Hole Oceanographic Institute where he can usually be found if not at home, working on fiendish inventions of oceanographic or personal nature. The telly at work has a number of (617) 548-1400 x2421 and can be used to contact him at any time without fear of raising his boss' ire. Intensely personal contact may be strained by the close proximity of working acquaintances (but that doesn't mean you shouldn't try!).

****

I really don't feel like writing. Really. It's snowing outside and I want to go home and sleep. Nothing worse than a case of spring fever with three inches of snow already fallen and more on the way. Oh well, duty and deadline have gotten me this far, might as well continue.

Boskone was the last con I was at. I must say that I have never gotten so pissed off at a convention hotel in my life. Three weeks before the con I called up to reserve a room, and found out that the rooms at convention rates were all sold out. They were perfectly willing to reserve us a standard rate room - $80 per night - as they did to about 20% of the con attendees. Then on monday morning of the con at 3 ayem I called the desk and got the checkout time extended to 3 in the afternoon. When we got down to the desk that afternoon they tried to charge us $35 extra for staying past checkout time! The manager pointed out that the hotel had not issued any extensions. I don't know if he was lying or not. I'm not sure which would have been worse, either. A convention without extended checkout is near unbearable to most. Combined with all the other problems the hotel had presented to the convention (like kicking us off the mezzanine because Senator Tsonga's birthday party was going on and they hadn't planned for our traffic through an area security wanted restricted (i.e. the main lobby)), it got to the point where I was beginning to lose my temper with the manager of the hotel. We did manage to work things out, but I will give a hearty notice to all to avoid the Park Plaza Hotel in Boston if at all possible. And NESFA is still considering using the hotel again next year!

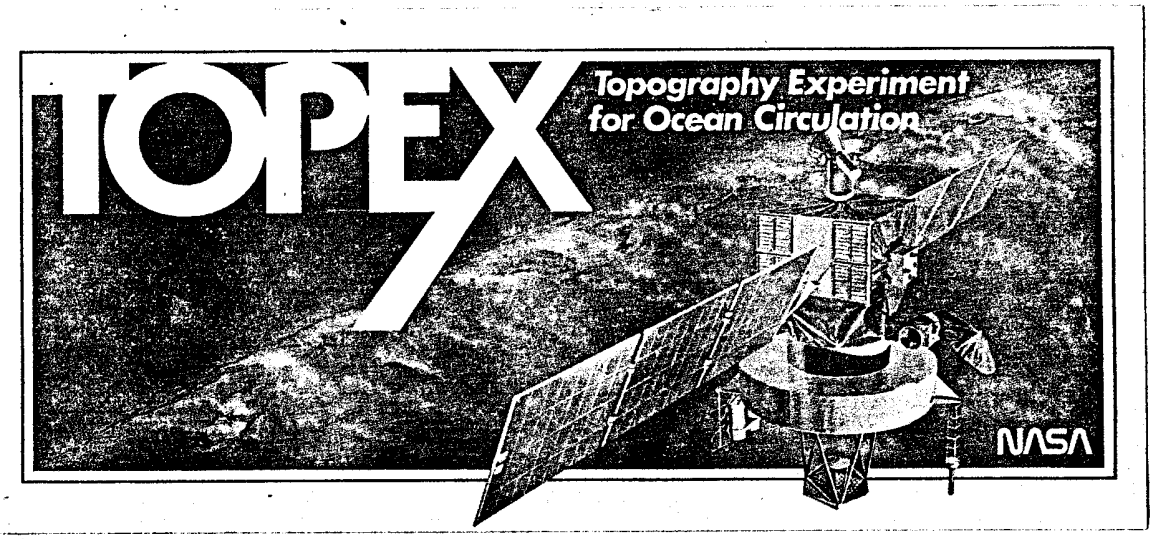
The group of us that were there (Bonnie Jones, Greg Ruffa, Rolf Wilson, Gerald Corrigan, Alice Insley, Phil Foglio, Roxanne Meida and I) managed to enjoy things anyway. We trekked through the subway system and a long distance through the snow to go to No-Name Restaurant out on one of the piers. The directions that they gave me when I called were much shorter that the distance we actually had to go. Or maybe the distances were just much longer (never can tell in a universe that isn't standing still). After we finished standing outside in the cold for 30 or 40 minutes and then eating, we decided that we didn't want to walk back and packed seven into a cab for the return trip.

I scrounged a Sonobuoy - a device we use for retransmitting on radio acoustic signals picked up in the ocean - at the GT party (there were four people there so I can call it a party). Rolf didn't get to eat a lobster. The art show was Fantabulous. We even went out for ice cream cones in the blizzard. But if Boskone wasn't as close as it is, I wouldn't be planning on going again next year. I probably shouldn't say that though, because if none of you come it certainly won't be much fun!

The week before Boskone I became an 1802 programmer. Proof of that is that I had my first nightmare involving branch instructions in three years. I hadda build a widget that would convert coded data from a buoy I've been working on into something a printer could swallow. The engineer I was working for was convinced that the data restructuring could be done cheaper in a logic system using gates and other chips in the 4000 series CMOS logic family. Another engineer was convinced that it could be done cheaper with a little 1802 microcomputer board, as did I. After getting into a "discussion" on the matter, the engineer I was working for (who didn't want to pay for my learning to program on the 1802) said " All right - I throw down the gauntlet. You have two weeks to do it all in. Anything over that that you need comes out of your vacation time! What do you think of that?" Nothing like a little incentive to get you to learn something that you need to learn about sooner or later, so I put my neck in the noose. It took me two weeks to build the little widget, learn to program the 1802, and then get the program written and working. No sweat - I got it done three hours before the deadline (pant.. pant.. pant..).

Other than that, the past few months at work have been rather slow. Except for one afternoon last week, that is. After I got back from afternoon coffee break and started working on a circuit design, I heard a rather panicked (but nonetheless emphatic) "Oh Shit!" ring out from the room behind me, followed by "Sandy, this battery pack is awful hot and it's leaking stuff all over!". I went in to see what was going on and was confronted by shouting for paper towels and a garbage pail. There, on the benchtop, was a seething dripping pack of 60 'D' size Duracells that had somehow shorted out and was doing it's best to make a mess. I scooped the pack into the garbage barrel, covered it, and Chris and I made a beeline down the stairs and out to the dock where we threw the pack into the ocean. It sat there bubbling away in three meters of water for a long time.

Luckily, there aren't any chemicals in the cells that would cause problems. All the electrolytes and metals are present in seawater already or combine with seawater constituents to form inactive compounds. The batteries neutralize quickly. A good thing too, because I hadn't been looking forward to diving to retrieve them later after they had cooled and discharged. If we had been using Lithium cells instead we wouldn't have had to worry about contamination of the ocean. We would have had to worry about fixing the big hole in the laboratory that would have been made. Nothing like a little crisis in the afternoon to wake you up.



Last week when the shuttle was up, everyone in the lab asked me whenever they wanted info on the flight. One day during lunch as I was going out for a walk several folks stopped me, and we got into an involved discussion. I was still in my gold shuttle jacket at the time and was wondering when the section chief was going to come by with a tour and see this wild haired person in a gold jacket scribbling shuttle thrust vectors on the blackboard before a dozen technicians and engineers. I never did get to go out walking that day.

I don't even feel self-conscious about wearing my jacket to the supermarket or laundromat any more (maybe I should?).

I just saw the above sticker posted on the wall in one of the other buildings. Pretty colors don't reproduce on this machine, unfortunately. Maybe there is a chance of me working toward a Payload Specialist for oceanographic satellites and being able to stay here at WHOI! Boyoboyoboy! I've got to look into this.

Last Sunday evening we had another of the biweekly Woods Hole Folk Music Society concerts. Bill Staines was in town for another of his wonderful concerts. I knew it was going to be a good evening when the whole audience joined in on the chorus of the first song. I had never heard the song before and there were at least 200 people there who seemed to, judging by the volume they reached. I guess that's because Woods Hole isn't just a town - it's a community. I think I'm going to stay here for a while.

Quickie mailing comments for this month (before the system crashes again and loses all this) are below. Hopefully you'll all get to read them before England and Argentina start World War Three.

National Noid: Really interesting stuff, Kip. Are you going to be a regular from now on? // Kingsley did do some very strange stuff, most of it with Jean Jaques Perrey. Check out the mini-listing I've done below for Jamie if you're interested in other electronic music albums. Jittlov used a song off of the "Essential..." album for music to his Mickey Mouse sequences. The Disney folks liked it so much that they re-recorded it and it's now known as the Electric Light Parade Music. I don't know if Perrey or Kingsley wrote the music or not.

Cmprsd Vrbg: I had to work with a similar light board in high school. That's where the electrician announced that it was "the amps, not the volts that means how far a spark will jump across a gap". After he left I opened the dimmer board up and checked it out myself to make sure that he hadn't screwed up the works!

Since I've started working in the community hall I've had to deal with a new type light board. Sixteen individual lever driven rheostats. No ganging, no nuthin. For blackouts I built a frame out of 2x4 so we can push them all down at the same time. One of the engineers and I are thinking about building a computer controlled 64 channel system with a light pen and the rest of the goodies. Of course we'll have a manually controlled slider panel too - that's half the fun! Seeing as how I've already got most of the parts it may actually get done in the next two years.

Closed for Renovation: Dummy! This years' Confusion was number 11, not 12.

Morning Perspectives: Ah, yes. Those wonderful years at school. Lately I've started to wonder if I really ever want to return to one of those fine institutions to get a Master's. The stress that I would probably go through doesn't seem to be worth what I expect I would learn - when compared to what I am learning here. My last year at MTU I went through a personality degradation (according to several friends) that even I could notice. It was bothering me quite a bit. I think that I've finally surfaced again in just these past few months. The college experience as a whole was worth the trouble for as far as it went, but I question the worth of extending it. I can only say that for myself, though. I do miss all the trappings that surrounded university life (like PFRC and all that) but I do not miss the academic side at all. // NPR also carries A Prarie Home Companion saturday evenings at 6 EST. Listen in if you can. It's two hours of live radio with folk, jazz and other music plus comedy in a home town vein. Good stuff. // Didn't know that Tron had Carlos doing music, but they have done some shooting in previously restricted areas of Lawrence Livermore labs. Apperently they are using some of the computer areas for sets, with a possible chase scene filmed in other areas too! Even after Disney's recent failures in SF I might go see it when it comes to town (of course, local theatre prices are only $2.50).

Mubetan: Allright, Allright, I'll read soul of a new machine! Seems like I can't pick up any publication dealing with technology recently without finding somebody doing a review of the book. Most folks seem to enjoy it. // I found a piece of tinkertoy (the little red one) in a power supply I was given to fix today here at work. How it got there I won't even hazard to guess. I'll put it in the box I've started for Project Tinkertoy.

Harmonic Coefficients: Being a cheap SOB I've opted for just going down to the town library once a month and perusing the issues of AW&ST that have collected. The pictures are making me think twice about my own subscription. I have recently seriously started thinking about cancelling some of the subscriptions to other magazines that I get, seeing as how I only ever end up reading about 40% of the stuff that comes. Most of it ends up on a shelf with the intention of getting around to it in a later life. // Erin got a consulting job for a few weeks in Connecticut through Adventure Games in Minneapolis. She and several other folks are going to be doing viddy-o game design for Coleco home game units. She seems just as addicted as you, but she gets paid to play and analyze arcade games Coleco wants to make home versions of for a while before she starts on the artistic design end of things.

Melange: I liked your contrib, but I liked the table of contents even more. Ah, well, such is life.

Eighth Orbital: No slide! Sob..... // I'm glad Jon Singer got his Pyro through you. The one I mailed to him came back with the Post Orfice denying any knowledge of his existence. // Sorry about the confusion with the zine. I was really getting hard pressed for time (which is why I printed issue 32 out of my own pocket instead of having Jeff do it) and didn't have enough time to sit down and have friends give it the once over for errors and "confusements". Of course, I'm never satisfied with the product when it goes out the door anyway.... // I hate wearing ties too. Luckily this job is relaxed and I normally wear T-shirts and jeans. Of course, salaries here don't exactly reflect the three-piece suit lifestyle. // Below is a list of the electronic music I have in my library or am trying to obtain. Stuff with a ! before it means that I think it is of exceptionally high caliber. * means that it is interesting but should not be played to folks who you are trying to impress with your sense of musical taste (in other words, find it in the local library of a cut-out bin at the record store). ? means that I'm not sure because I'm still trying to find the album. I haven't even included the stuff that I think is really garbage, like the works of Morton Subotnik, or the stuff that is a particular style of music (like rock) but not father into the electronic spectrum than into its own area. Remember that the classifications are all subjective according to my tastes. Tangerine Dream, for instance, gets rather monotonous, while Perrey has an interesting range of timbres but is rather tacky in musical style.

Carlos, Wendy	!Switched on Bach !The Well-tempered Synthesizer Sonic Seasonings A Clockwork Orange Walter Carlos by Request Switched on Bach II Switched on Brandenburgs
Greenslade, Dave	Greenslade !Pentateuch of the Cosmogeny
Kingsley, Gershon	- see Perrey
Moraz, Patrick	Patrick Moraz ?I
Murgtaugh, John	*Blues Current
Oldfield, Mike	!Airborne ?Ommadawn Tubular Bells - others
Perrey, Jean J.	*The Essential Perrey & Kingsley ?The in Sound from Way Out *Moog Indigo (Vanguard VSD 6549)
Synergy (Larry Fast)	!Cords !Games !Sequencer !Synergy
Tangerine Dream	Sorcerer (soundtrack) Encore -? others
Tomita	Firebird Kosmos !Pictures at an Exibition !Snowflakes are Dancing The Planets Bermuda Triangle
Vangelis	!Albedo 0.39 *Beauborg !China !Heaven & Hell Short Stories !Spiral ?Chariots of Fire
Wurman, Hans	?The Moog Strikes Bach *RCA LSC 3125

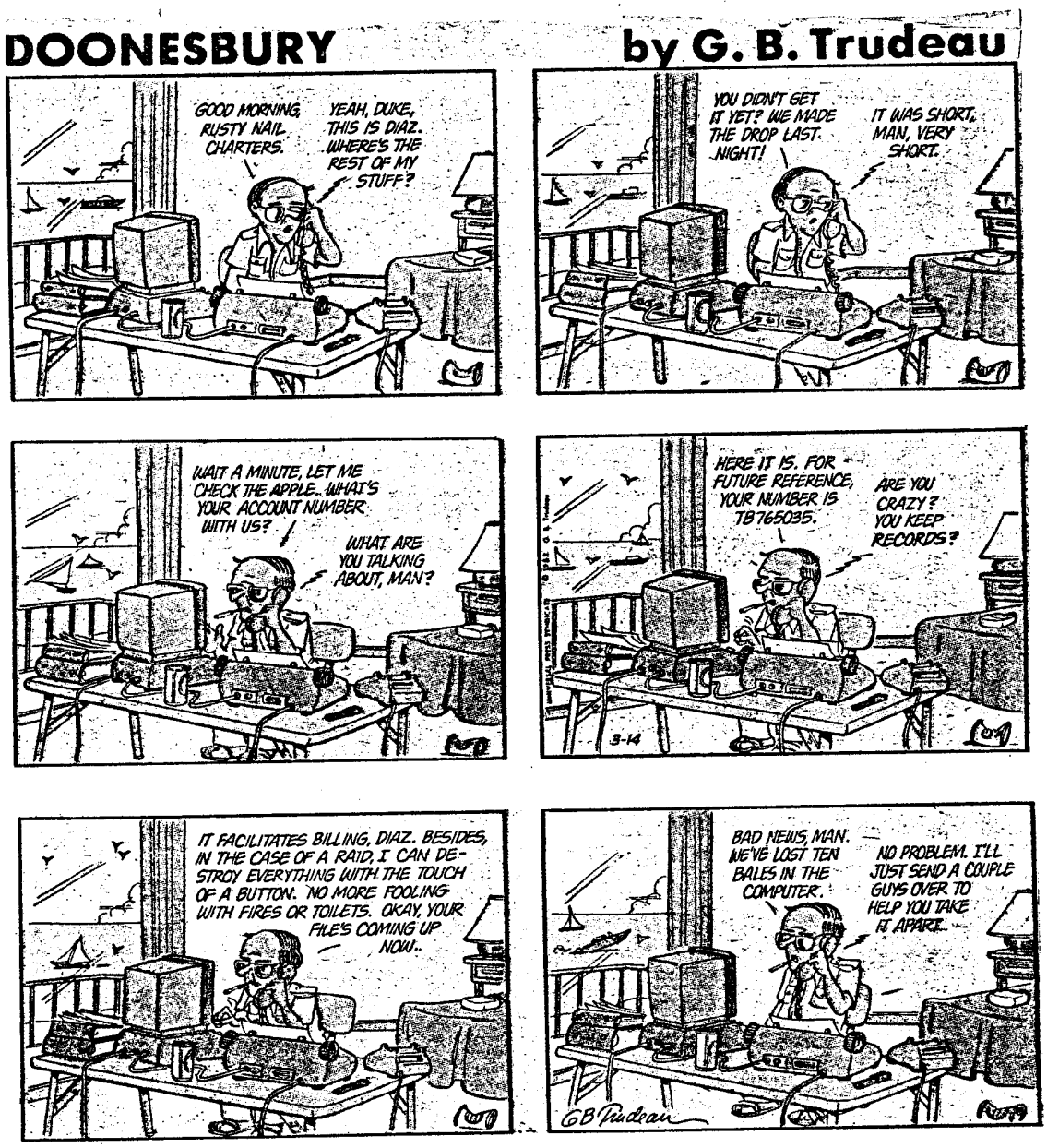
I'd be willing to make or trade tapes of music once I get a cassette deck. And if you're interested in more, I'd be happy to send you my listing of the albums in my library and ones I'm looking for (which includes all styles).

101 Ways: I got this little mangled ball in the mail which turned out to be your post-mailing. After flattening it out (I know better than to try and iron out a Xerox) I managed to read it using a good non-directional light source. It was more readable than many of the ditto contribs I've seen in this and other APA's. // I'll have to try the bread recipe sometime. On the subject of cooking, be forewarned that I am planning on doing a special Kitchen Edition of Pyro sometime this or next year and I'm asking for a few favorite recipies from every GT member. Food prep. is as valid an area of the mystical technical arts as any other!

Rather than writing more without really saying anything I'll close up here and fill in some of the remaining tasteless white space with a Doonesbury that has a bit of interest for the computer oriented in our group.

Sorry to those of you who I didn't comment to.
Maybe next time.

Ciao, Ciao, Ciao....



RABBIT RUNES 1.11 v.1

BEING MUSES GENERATED AT RABBIT RUN FOR DISSEMINATION THROUGH APATECH BY
JOHN H. FRAMBACH, SAWYER, MI., 49125 APRIL 1982

WELCOME TO THE FIRST POST-HOLOCAUST ISSUE OF R^2. LIFE AFTER THE END OF THE WORLD HASN'T CHANGED MUCH, ONCE I BECAME USED TO THE ANGELIC CHORUS THE BRIMSTONE DIDN'T MATTER. THE OCCASIONAL MUTANT ONE SPOTS HAS BECOME ALMOST CHARMING. I REFER, OF COURSE, TO THE PLANETARY ALIGNMENT OF 10 MARCH, OR AS WE CALLED IT OUT HERE IN THE "STICKS", ARMAGEDDON. DUE TO THE POPULAR PRESS COVERAGE OF THIS LITTLE EVENT, I HAD TWO FIRST HAND REPORTS TOLD TO ME OF PEOPLE IN NEAR CATATONIA AS THE DAY OF THE "GRAND ALIGNMENT" APPROACHED. BEING OF A MORE REALISTIC NATURE, BILL HANES AND I GOT TOGETHER FOR A FINAL BASH BEFORE THE FINAL BLOW-OUT, BUT ALAS, BECUASE OF OVERCAST SKIES WE COULDN'T SEE THE PLANETS AND MISSED THE COMING OF THE GREAT WHITE HANKY. WHEN THE WORLD ENDED I MISSED IT, SO HERE I AM HACKING AWAY, LOOKING FOR WORK, AND COMING TO TERMS WITH PRE-CALCULUS MATH.

EVEN THOUGH THE EARTH DIDN'T BLOW-UP, OLE' MA NATURE TRIED TO BLOW IT AWAY YESTERDAY. BEING THE SEASON OF DRAMATIC CLIMATIC CHANGE, THOSE OF YOU WHO DON'T LIVE UNDERGROUND MAY HAVE NOTICED THE WINDS ARE PICKING UP A BIT, LIKE SHINGLES, TREES, AND TRAILER PARKS. THE DEBRIS WERE FLYING PAST MY WINDOW WHEN I SAT DOWN TO START THIS ISSUE (IT'S AMAZING WHAT GOES ON OUTSIDE THAT WINDOW), AND I WATCHED 'EM GO ON BY JUST LONG ENOUGH TO NOT HAVE ANYTHING DOWN ON PAPER WHEN THE ELECTRONS STOPPED MOVING THROUGH THE LINES. YES INDEED, BLACKOUT!

HERE AT THE RUN, LOSS OF ELECTRICITY IS NO REAL INCONVINIENCE, JUST A CHANGE OF CHAOS. THE ONLY MOVING PART TO THE WOOD STOVE IN THE BASEMENT IS MYSELF, THE QUAINT HURRICANE LAMPS IN THE PORCH ALWAYS HAVE FUEL IN THEM, AND THERE'S A STOVE IN THE BASEMENT THAT'S FIRED ON BOTTLED LP. THE ONLY PROBLEM COULD BE REFRIGERATION, WHICH IS NO SWEAT IN THE WINTER, BUT A BIT OF A STINKER OTHERWISE. THERE ARE ALSO A FEW 12V. DEVICES LYING ABOUT TO KEEP IN TOUCH WITH THE REST OF THE WORLD.

THINGS GET DOWN RIGHT RELAXIN' AFTER WE GET GEARED UP FOR RUNNING LIGHTS OUT. THIS OLD HOUSE COMES WITH MANY AND VARIED WINDOWS CONVINIENTLY LOCATED FOR READING BY DURING THE DAY, AN ADEQUATE FIREPLACE FOR THE EVENINGS, AND STRATEGICALLY LOCATED BEDS FOR THE NIGHTS. SURE BEATS BARRICADING THE DOORS AND HOLDING OFF THE LOOTERS. WHERE WERE YOU WHEN THE LIGHTS WENT OUT?...I'D BE INTERESTED IN HEARING HOW ALL YOU FOLKS OUT THERE IN APALAND HANDLE THOSE DARK TIMES WHEN THE POWER GOES AWAY AND ALL GETS QUIET.

THREE DOWN AND GOAL TO GO

HURRAH!! THE COLUMBIA IS DOWN AND IN ONE MAJOR PIECE. AND WHAT A BEAUTIFUL HUNK OF MACHINERY THAT SHUTTLE WAS WHEN IT CAME ROLLING DOWN THE RUNWAY ALL COVERED WITH STREAKS AND DUST LOOKING ALL THE WORLD LIKE A USED SPACECRAFT. WHENEVER THE SHUTTLE GOES UP OR COMES DOWN I TRY TO WATCH IT ON THE MAGIC WINDOW (THE THINGS ONLY "THE BOOB TUBE" WHEN CHARLIES ANGELS OR THREE'S COMPANY IS ON) WHEREVER I AM AT THE TIME. THE LAUNCHES HAVE BEEN NO PROBLEM SINCE NASA OBLIGINGLY WORKED THEM INTO MY SCHEDULE, BUT THE LANDINGS HAVE LED TO SOME INTERESTING VIEWING HABITS. MISSION ONE CAME DOWN WHEN I WAS IN SOUTH BEND SPRAYING FERTILIZER FOR A LIVING. A KINDLY OLD LADY WAS WATCHING THE LANDING WHEN I SHOWED UP TO MEASURE HER LAWN FOR A JOB, AND ALLOWED ME TO WATCH.

THE SECOND MISSION CAME DOWN WHEN I WAS HERE AT THE RUN, SO IT WAS EASY ENOUGH TO CATCH. BUT THE THIRD MISSION PRESENTED SOME INTERESTING LOGISTICS. I WAS UP TO THE COMMUNITY COLLEGE NORTH OF HERE FOR CLASSES THE DAY STS III WAS ABLE TO LAND, AND NOT A TELEVISION IN SIGHT. BEING THE RESOURCEFUL TYPE(GEE, NO, GT) I JUMPED INTO WHAT'S LEFT OF MY WAGON AND MADE FOR A LOCAL SHOPPING MALL (ACTUALLY, THE ONLY MALL) AND THE PENNY'S INSIDE. AMAZING THINGS, T.V. DISPLAYS, YOU CAN FIND THREE BRAND NEW SETS NEXT TO EACH OTHER AND TUNE IN EACH OF THE THREE NETWORKS. NBC IS PRETTY GOOD FOR AUDIO WHEN TOM BROKAW ISN'T DOING IT AND JOHN CHANCELOR IS, ABC HAS GOOD VISUALS AND A DIRECTOR WITH AN EYE FOR GOOD SHUTTLE SHOTS, AND CBS IS JUST SORT OF THERE. FOR THOSE OF YOU WHO CARE, THE NETWORKS ONLY USED IDENTICAL SHOTS ABOUTS 25% OF THE TIME, ALTHOUGH THEY TEND TO USE THE SAME TYPE OF SHOT (GROUND TO AIR, AIR TO AIR, ETC.).

AFTER THE SETS WERE TUNED IN, THE CROWD BEGAN. AN OLD GENT WANDERED BY AND SAID "OH", THEN STOOD NEXT TO ME AND WATCHED THE WHOLE COVERAGE. VARIOUS AND SUNDRY SHOPPERS

BEGAN COLLECTING ABOUT THE TIME THE COLUMBIA CROSSED THE CALIFORNIA COST. ABOUT THE TIME THE WEST BORDER OF NEVADA WAS REACHED I NOTICED A FEW OF THE STORE EMPLOYEES STANDING IN THE AISLE WATCHING, BUT THE LONG RANGE CAMERA PICKED UP THE SHUTTLE (55 MILES OUT, OPTICALS) AND I QUIT THE HEADCOUNT TO EXPERIENCE THE MOMENT.

ANYBODY WHO HAS READ A PAPER KNOWS HOW THE LANDING WENT, BUT THE COVERAGE OF THE PENNY'S WAS KINDA WEAK SO I'LL FILL YOU IN. AS SOON AS THE COLUMBIA WAS ON THE GROUND HALF THE CROWD WENT AWAY SOMEWHERE, BY THE TIME SHE CAME TO A STOP THERE WERE FIVE OF US LEFT, AND ONE OTHER GUY WAS STILL THERE WHEN THE DETOX CREW ROLLED UP. ALL THE WONDER HAS GONE OUT OF THE WORLD. IT CAN BE A SOBERING THOUGHT TO REALIZE THERE ARE TEENAGERS TOO YOUNG TO REMEMBER THE MOON LANDINGS.

MAILING COMMENTS

COVER: ALRIGHT AL, ALLLLRIGHT.

555 TIMES: IS OKAY WITH ME IF YOU WANT TO PASS AROUND THE EDITORIALSHIP, GREG. WE CAN GET GROUP RATES WITH MURDER, INC. AS EASY AS SINGLES.

TRANSPORTER TOPICS: WE GET TRAINS LIKE THAT THROUGH HERE REGULAR ENOUGH THAT WE CALL THEM THE SUNDAY MORNING SPECIALS. IF WE'RE ASLEEP WE CAN'T BE HURT, RIGHT?//RE TECHIES BURDEN, SOMEBODY HAS TO DO IT.

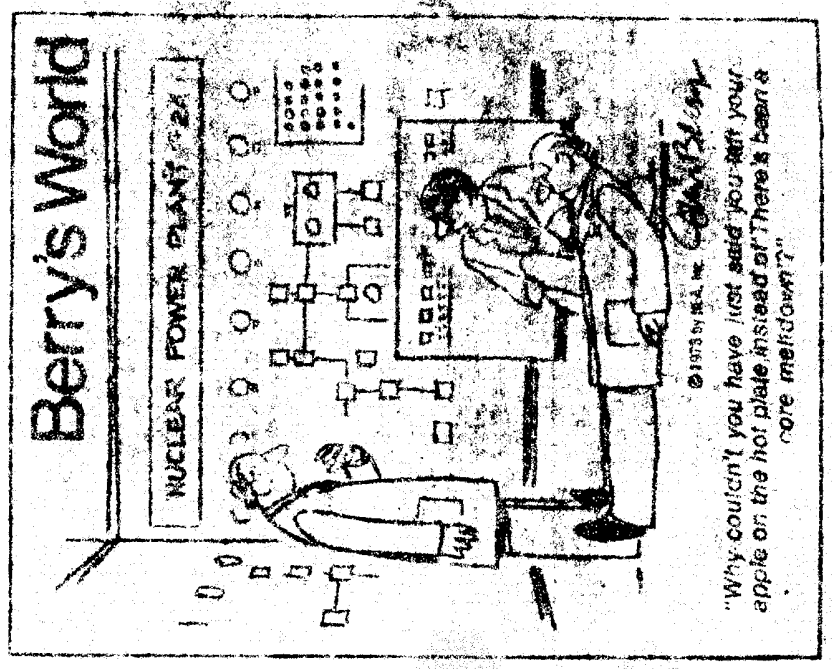
NATIONAL NOID: I AM OVERWHELMED BY THE DIVERSITY. THE ONLY THING I CAN COMMENT ON IS THE WRESTLING. I SPENT THREE MONTHS IN GA. AND I STILL GIGGLE WHEN I THINK OF THOSE PROGRAMS.

COMPRESSED VERBIAGE: THIS IS A MISNOMER, DAVE.//REGET TO KNOW YOUR ROBOT, GENE AND ROGER DON'T KNOW EVERYTHING.

CLOSED FOR RENOVATION: RE ATTITUDE TOWARDS CITIES, YER BUT REMEMBER ALL THE GREAT THINGS CITIES MAKE AVAIL...WHY DO I SUDDENLY RECALL SCREAMING MY LUNGS OUT THE FIRST TIME I RODE INTO NEW YORK WITH YOU? CONSIDER THE ZEBRA FISH, BEAUTIFUL FROM A DISTANCE WITH ETHEREAL FINS AND ATTRACTIVE COLORATION, BUT COME INTO DIRECT CONTACT WITH IT AND YOU'RE D E A D. CITIES ARE BIG FISH, FROM 5000 FEET.

ON THE OTHER HAND, A CITY IS IN ITSELF INANIMATE. IT'S THE PEOPLE THAT MAKE A PLACE PLEASANT OR A NIGHTMARE, OR RATHER, THE DEGREE OF TOLERABILITY IS DETERMINED BY THE CONTENTS OF THE PACKAGE. THE ONLY WAY I'VE BEEN ABLE TO COME TO TERMS WITH THE MASSES IS TO MEET THEM AS INDIVIDUALS, SOMETHING THAT IS NOT ALWAYS RETURNED. WE ALWAYS SEE OURSELVES AS AN INDIVIDUAL IN THE FACELESS CROWD, FORGETTING THAT TO ANOTHER WE ARE THE FACELESS ONES. WHEN THE REST OF THE WORLD CAN ACHEIVE YOUR FEELING OF INTEGRATION WITHOUT FEAR OF LOSING INDIVIDUALITY, I THINK CITIES WILL LOSE THEIR UGLINESS AND BECOME PLACES THAT ARE A JOY TO VISIT AND A BEAUTY TO BEHOLD. IF PEOPLE WILL LEARN. IF FROGS HAD WINGS THEY WOULDN'T WUMP THEIR KEISTERS EVERY TIME THEY JUMPED. I'VE JUST COME UP TO MY PRINTING DEADLINE SO HERE'S AN ILLO TO CLOSE THAT PROVES TWO THINGS: COMMUNICATION IS EVERYTHING, AND PLAN YOUR WORK (DIVE) - WORK (DIVE) YOUR PLAN.

OH, YAH, WOULD SOMEBODY PLEASE PRINT THE DEFINITIVE APA SLANG GLOSSARY I STILL MARVEL AT THE JARGON.



JF

Sing Loo for the Life of a Bear

CHAPTER SIX

In Which
Paul Draws a Heffalump

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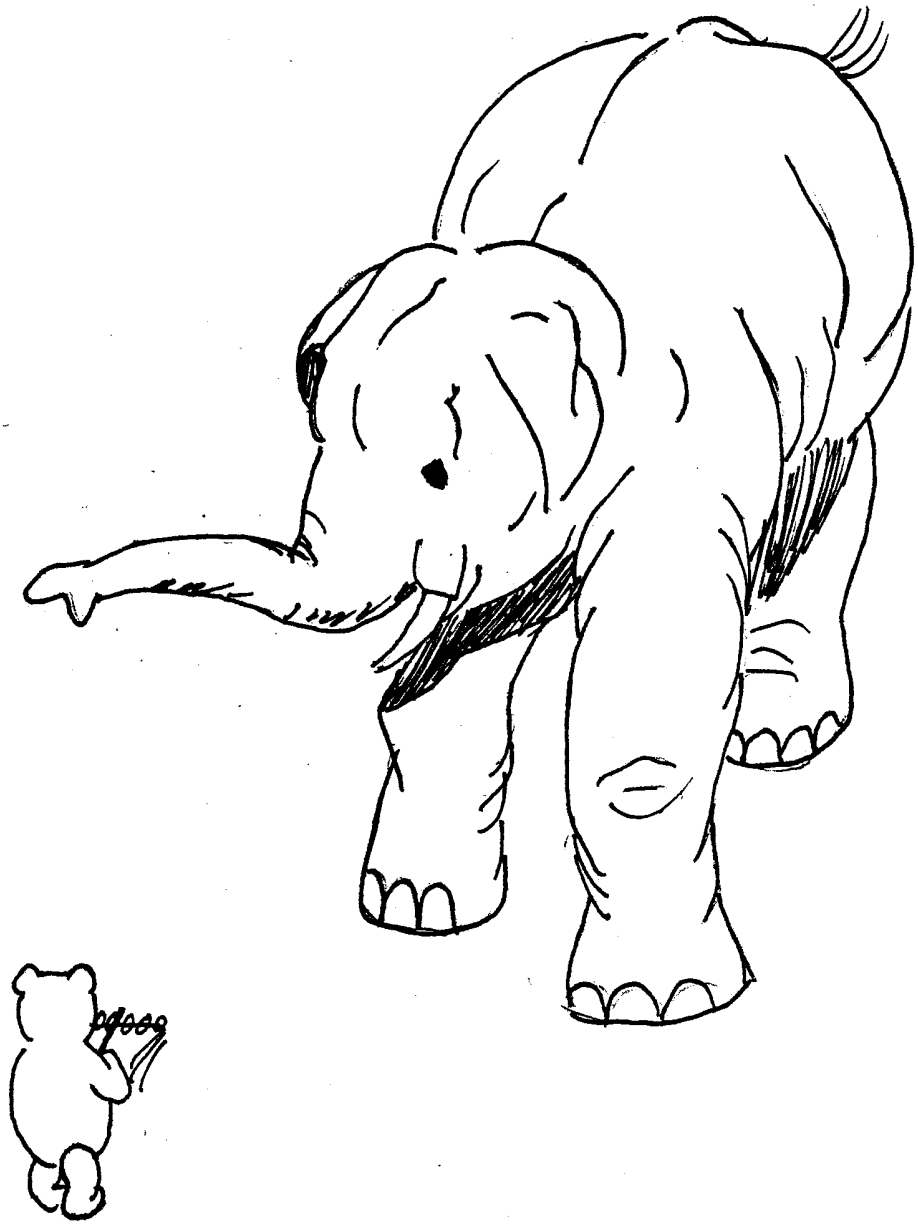


pg 2

MAILING COMMENTS

Cap'n Al (postmailing) I wish I had a job on the sea. I wish I had Gretchen's job. When the phones don't ring, she works on real things. As a matter of fact I'd have that job if the woman hadn't wanted a girl (job driscrimination!).///
ct Dave: E. Michael Blake made mention the other day that Moebius seems to be the only heterosexual theatre group in Chicago.///Oh, I see--this is mostly Pyro 32! I thought it was all zine.

APA-TECH 17

I gotta start writing longer zines. I neglected to ego-scan 17 before actually reading it, and was pleasantly surprised at the response Chapter Two got once it finally made it in. Flushed all the Whofen out of the bushes, too.

TOC I'll join GT eventually. Really. I keep asking people what to do, and they keep saying, "Well, it's real simple, we'll do it later..."

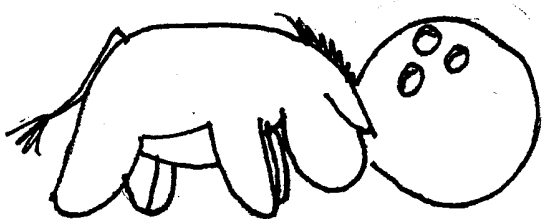
SHALMANESER Rotating OEship sounds like a sound plan to me.

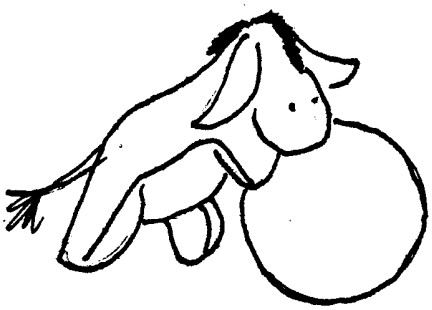
ROD No, What's The Deffinate(sic) Article?///Just about everyone is disappointed with Niven anymore.///

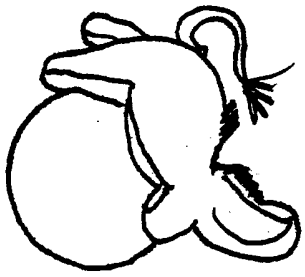
KIP Electronic Gershwin? It'd have to be done just right, but if it was I'd love it///

DAVE I found your format quite readable.///I think I missed you at Windycon, unless I was one of the "I didn't know you were here!"s, which I think I remember.///The Rubik snake inspired a party here in Rogers Park a while back. A reptile party. There were Rubik snakes, and a Shmuzzle puzzle (shmuzzles are those lizards that Escher draws that all fit together), and one was welcome to birng one's own reptile. Those who weren't playing with the snakes or the shmuzzles folded out the furniture and imitated the shmuzzles. //Perhaps what makes a good character is when you can predict the character's unpredictablility. There's a seventh season M*A*S*H episode in which Hawkeye and B. J., much to Charles' disgust and amusement, are trying to hide a young Korean from the ROK "draft officers". They dress him up in a dress, which he doesn't like, so they hide him in Charles' bunk just as the ROK officers come in (Charles'is out of the tent), looking for this boy. Hawkeye and B. J. have just convinced the officers that the lump in the bunk is a sleeping Charles when Charles walks in and blows it for them. So the officers naturally ask, "If you're Dr. Winchester, who's that in your bunk?" (At this point I knew what Charles was going to do.) Charles looks at the officers, looks at the bunk, and turns on Hawkeye and B. J. "You swine! You moral degenerates! How dare you bring one of your trollops in here and put her in my bunk!"///cts me: The second half of "Doctor Who and the Energy Beam" is in Shadowstar #4.///Your pastiche read very well. Pooh seemed a little too articulate to me, but that was probably a result of the influence of GEB (which I haven't read).

(cont) If you address mailing comments by zine titles, why don't you include the person's name too. People can't always remember people's zine titles from one issue to the next.///re Moebius: I'm now in the process of directing a show we'll do at XCon. This produces a big bite on my time, which is why I have no natter this issue.///Not RAEBNCing is nice in theory, but sometimes impractical. I'd rather suffer RAEBNCs from you than not hear from you.///Known Space fan stories, to my mind, are probably less likely a phenomenon to occur than Trek or Galactica or Who fan stories, because Known Space fans are literary-sf-type fans, whereas Trek and Galactica and Who fans are media-sf-fans, as a general rule. Fan stories based in Established Universes are basically a prod uct of at least a small degree of Raging Media Neo-ism, and the hard science fiction that Niven writes is too much work for those of us who are more interested in the characters. Plus, Known Space hasn't the constant regular cast that media sf has, and fan stories are generally character-inspired.







JOHN RAEBNC

CAP'N AL I think your experience with the sight of cities by air is a common one with all of us. I've certainly had it. Next Windycon let's arrange a trip to the top of the Sears Tower. --No, wait, I forgot about Chicon. Let's do it then.///cts me: I didn't mean to be getting down on Gretchen for what she said to me about mediafandom. I've already told her in print elsewhere that I took the remark in the spirit in which it was intended. And, see you at Minicon.///Time Bandits isn't a Monty Python film. Not by name, nor would I say in execution. There were only three or four of them who had anything to do with the film.

GRETCHEN I'm sorry you feel that way. I don't think I need to say again how much I like it when you're around.

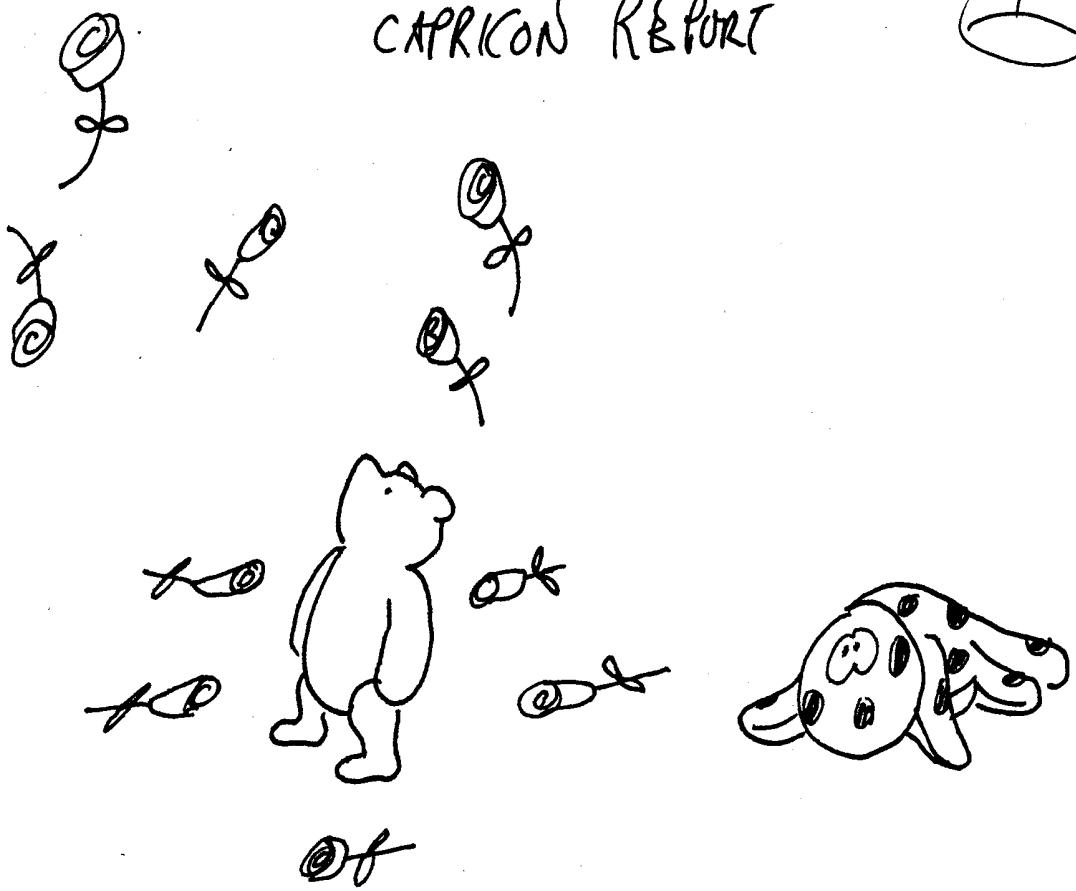
DOUG ct Jamie: I wonder a bit about the disparity between A/T ac and W/A ac myself. Although both came out in two volumes in their latest issues.

JEFF The Muppet Caper is Hugo nominable? That's nice to know, but I don't think it's worthy. Why didn't their first movie win, then?

LEININGER Good luck on your work and school difficulties. And thanks for the business.

Well, gang, it's April 4th, deadlines six days away, and I'm out of time. I'll pick up from here next time, but I won't promise to catch up.

CAPRICON REPORT



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Just Irrita-Bill #8

An infrequent publication of: Bill Roper
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****

Why isn't this man smiling?

Well, a number of reasons actually. First, I feel some vague obligation to produce this AT zine before Minicon (it's April 8th on this side of the typewriter, guys) because I'm officially in Dutch and only the good-natured Mr. Ruffa stands between me and my departure from this ~~August~~ april publication. Unfortunately, the time schedule is tight, and I'm not sure how much I can get done before I have to move to other pursuits (Thursday night meeting is here tonight) and I am real tired of minacing when I get around to acing at all.

Second, I note that our OE is in a worse state than I'm in--she had to postmail to #16 to stay in (I saw no postmailing) and wasn't in #17 either which kinda indicates a lack of enthusiasm for the job.

On the other hand, AT 17 did hit 110 pages, so maybe there's some hope for the APA yet. However, I'm leaning in the direction of a palace coup if we can find a new OE. (Sorry, Renee)

Third, it's April 8th, and I still have no job, although I had been led to expect that I would have a number of job offers in hand by now. Alas, of the numerous companies I've interviewed with, only 5 have not yet said no. I have callbacks scheduled with Quaker Oats and Motorola next week. First interviews with Miller Brewing and Marine National Exchange Bank in Milwaukee have yet to produce a letter letting me know either way (the former interview at the beginning of March, the latter at the end of April). Interactive Data Corp. I've talked to twice, but they aren't even sure if a job exists. You see, this is the first year they've tried to recruit MBAs out of school, and the local managers are used to calling up the corporate recruiter and saying "hire someone for me yesterday, I need them today". The concept of deciding in April that they might need someone in June is completely foreign to them. *gleep*

This is real irritating. Especially since I figure that I've really got to be better than a lot of the clowns who are getting jobs. Unfortunately, I have no business experience--all my jobs (with the exception of last summer's job with G.D. Searle) have been with universities--and that seems to be what the interviewers are looking for. Recession, you know. If we're going to hire somebody, we want to hire someone with experience so it'll take less time to bring him up to speed.

Bullshit. (Excuse me, I get emotional about this.) I'm afraid I don't

believe that corporate practices are all similar enough that a person can walk into a new company and not have to do a lot of learning about what goes on. Oh, there are exceptions. They (the ubiquitous they) say that it takes several years to train a good corporate lending officer which is why many banks are so anxious to pirate these people from other banks who have paid for the training. Even so, it's going to take some time to get them accustomed to their new restrictions imposed by the new organization.

At any rate, though, a lot of the people who are being hired here don't have job experience that relates directly to the job they're being hired for. One person who got a number of offers spent 10 years in the Navy as a nuclear engineer, experience with little relation to the planning job he eventually accepted. (I suppose they figured that if it was good enough qualifications to be President of the U.S., it was good enough for them. *sigh*)

Irritating above all are the job descriptions that say "work experience preferred" when what they really mean is "work experience required". It'd save both of us a lot of time if they'd say what they mean. (I suppose that some of the personnel departments rationalize by saying, "If Superman applies for the job and has no work experience, we'll give it to him anyway." Of course, the catch-22 is that there are no "Supermen", and if there were, they wouldn't be applying for this job.)

Another problem is that of lying in interviews. This comes highly recommended by the placement office and my fellow students. It seems to be well rewarded by the interviewers. This turns my stomach. I admit to having concealed some discontent with aspects of a job I'm interviewing for (for instance, a heavy requirement for travel). On the other hand, I don't have the gall to walk into an interviewer and gush that his company is the greatest thing since sliced bread and that I've wanted to be a brand manager since I was six years old and saw Tony the Tiger on TV.

Unfortunately, the interviewers seem to buy this particular line. (It's really a shame that I can't bug the placement office and playback some of the more salty comments about companies to their representatives--that'd curl their hair!) I don't like to believe that the interviewers are that stupid, but I have yet to see evidence to the contrary.

Ah well. One way or another, this should all be resolved by the next time I get one of these out, so stay tuned...

MAILINGCOMMENTSMAILINGCOMMENTSMAILINGCOMMENTSMAILINGCOMMENTSMAILINGCOMMENTS

My God, he's actually going to do some mailing comments for the first time in nearly a year!

I think I'll start with AT 17 and work backwards. I doubt I'll get that far into the past, and if I start from the other end, well...

Mailing comments on AT #17:

(If I didn't have a third page, I think I'd get killed...)

Cover: Nice! How'd you swing it?

Shal: Actually, I'd kind of be in favor of hijacking this zine (OEship) to Chicago given that 10 members are in town and two more are only a stone's throw away in Shampoo-Banana. All we need to do is find a sucker locally. (Mr. Christian, this is mutiny!)

Rod: We should be so lucky with the fifth shuttle. Meanwhile, here's a tidbit from the Tribune's gossip column (March 29th):

"A rumor being picked up at the White House and in the space industry has it that President Reagan, expected to be on hand in California for the July 4 landing of the next space shuttle, will have a big announcement to make on plans for a space station. A White House spokesman acknowledged hearing the talk but told INC. there would be no official comment. NASA administrator James M. Beggs recently said that the nation should set a new goal in space--"that goal should be a space station, giving us a permanent manned presence in space."" I hope so...

I'm not sure that the UF_6 was as dangerous as you think. First, uranium hexafluoride is a fairly unstable compound (which is why they had to use Teflon to handle it in the gaseous diffusion plants). So in that respect it'd be something like having a tankcar full of chlorine break open. (Not too good.) The danger from radioactivity should be minimal. U-238 has a half-life of billions of years--it just isn't that radioactive. Some of uranium's decay products <u>are</u> fairly radioactive, but their equilibrium concentration would be small.

Admittedly there would be some health hazard. The situation would be considerably better than that with the houses built on tailings from uranium mines (as is the case with some houses in Colorado). The problem is that the uranium has been removed and the shorter-lived radioactives have been concentrated in the tailings. Then, radon gas that is formed via radioactive decay is trapped in the houses and tends to concentrate. I doubt this would be much of a problem with a major UF_6 spill in an open area.

I suppose that people could have enough uranium to cause long-term damage deposited in their lungs through inhaling the gas, but fluorine toxicity would kill them long before the radiation would.

Kip: So you're an SWL too! I'm afraid I've been pretty much inactive since starting college, but during my glory days, I logged well over 100 broadcast stations and got verifications from about half of them. The ones I'm proudest of are the QSLs for the BBC Far Eastern Relay in Kuala Lumpur Malaysia and the BBC Cyprus Relay. (This because the BBC normally doesn't issue QSLs with enough information on them to verify your reception. I got lucky.) I also had good luck with XERMX--Radio Mexico, which apparently doesn't normally send QSLs. It either had something to do with the fact that I took Spanish in high school or with my father being in the military--I'm not sure which.

Dave: I think a "no assholes" policy at conventions is eminently practical. I tend to be of the school that says one warning and then we lower the ax. The only difficult part would be disseminating the names of the folk who had been warned once to the con staff (preventing a never-ending string of first warnings). This doesn't seem insurmountable...

John: Howdy! I have a lot more sympathy for the grain farmers than I would for the idiots who pulled the mock attack on the reactor. Of course, this could be because my grandfather was a farmer...

Cap'n Al: I'm afraid I've been flying for too long to get that real feeling of awe that you describe. Maybe I just need to get higher up--like, say, in orbit...

Gretchen: Coward...anyway, since when is your life dull?

Doug: Time-lost congratulations on your new job. (Just wanted to be the last to do so again--now I see what Gretchen means about time lag.)

See comment to Rod re shuttle and space...

Paul: You did, indeed, look very interesting with your jaw hanging open. (Every so often, he'd make a great effort and close it preparatory to saying something, but then it'd fall open again...)

Jeff: I have to agree on this year's novels. The best thing I've read has probably been Camber the Heretic and I have real qualms about giving Hugos to sequels... As far as I'm concerned, as long as an author has new things to say in a given world, he should keep doing so. Hence, I'm not as worried about series as you are--except to the extent that people repeat themselves because they don't have anything new to say.

Bill L: Even if you hope never to have to work in COBOL, it's probably still worth the time to take a course in it (assuming you can find a reasonable instructor). People keep looking at me funny when I tell them that I figure I can learn any language that I need to use (even if it's true...)

I did see clips from this pre-flight shuttle pilots' press conference on NBC Nightly News, so maybe they're getting better coverage lately.

I saw the specs for the electronic camera. I'm not impressed. Lousy resolution...

The encoding system for TV programs is interesting, but I doubt the networks will go along with it. They don't want people taping their broadcasts...

Dick: RAEBNC (I don't even own a Diesel engine...(Sorry, Jerry))

Valli: You write real good mailing comments. Care to write some more stuff that isn't MCs? (I remember the trouble I got into the last time I said something like this.)

Mike B: I tend to like Theory Y myself, where the objective is to provide a work environment where your employees want to work because they're enjoying themselves. (Something like you describe in Soul.)

Congratulations on the "new" job (not new now, anyway).

The non-redux type is easier to read...

Bill H: Why in the world did you choose to be on third shift? I'd think of that as a fate worse than--well, worse than first shift anyway. Following Doug's sterling example?

The best thing I saw in Analog last year was a novellette, "Emergence" by David Palmer. Unfortunately, it looks like the first part of a novel. (Not unfortunate in the sense that I don't want to see the novel--I do. But some people are awfully allergic to such things which will probably cost it a Hugo nomination. Ah well...)

My strategy for Qix produces something similar to your "comb" but two-sided (I call it a TV antenna). My top score is only about 50000, though, so there's got to be a better way. Also, when I play too long, I get a blister on my left index finger from the joystick. *sigh*

Clif: One reason that I have to stay in Apa-Tech is that if I quit right after getting you to join, you'd get yet another Good Buddy Bill story out of it.

Jam Session: More. More...

Mike S: RAEBNC (Argh! Eight months and he RAEBNCs me! Kill!)

Jerry: Why does it seem appropriate that Bill L. is recording "Slip Sliding Away" by Paul Simon while I'm reading your zine...?

You decided to go to business school so your own company won't go bankrupt from poor management. (Maybe from poor products, but that's another story.)

Greg: Apparently we survived the Great Alignment. (Although it is playing hob with the weather...)

Jamie: Sometimes filksong writing sessions work and sometimes they don't. It's hard to tell when you're going to get inspiration on the part of the group. (Of course, if you've got a large enough group, someone's going to be inspired, I suppose...)

There are good media fans and bad media fans, just as there are good filk fans and bad filk fans, good zine fans and bad zine fans, etc. The trick is sorting out the good ones from the bad ones...

I think I'm going to let this die at five pages, since people are starting to arrive.

See you in a couple of months!

Chief, there's been another defection to Oak Park.

Who?

Valli Hoski
and
Dick Smith.

Where?

They've moved to 227 South Kenilworth.

Zip code?

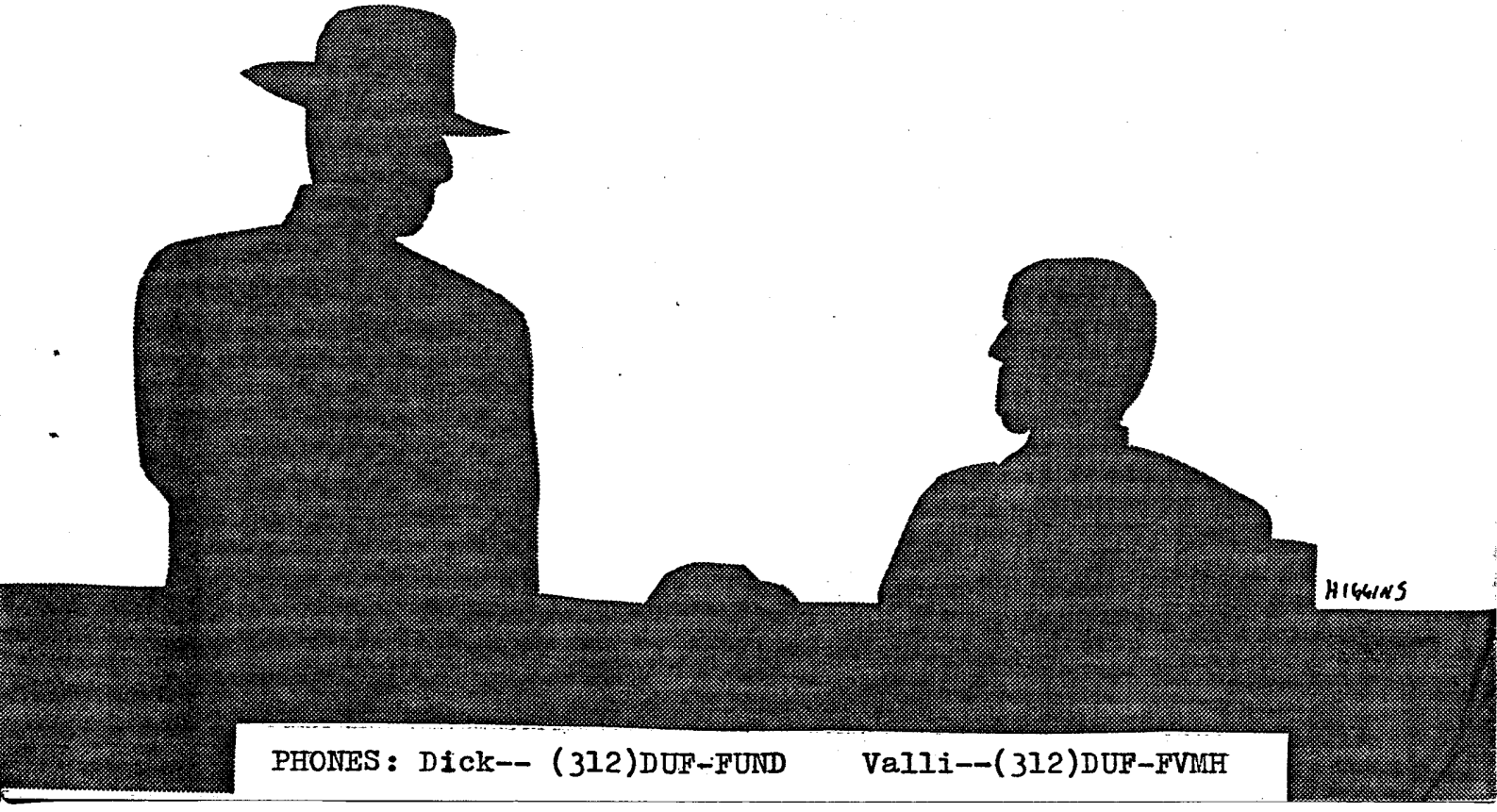
60302.

All right. Get a SMOF on it.

Right.

And notify the science fiction fans.

Already done.



PHONES: Dick-- (312)DUF-FUND Valli--(312)DUF-FVMH

THE JERRY-BUILT ZINE:

Hier Steh' Ich

The Jerry-Built Zine is written by Gerald Corrigan, 1304 Turtle Creek Drive, Apartment E, Palatine, IL 60067, Phone:(312)934-1243. He refers to his nonexistent publisher as Irrelevant Titles Press.

If I used relevant titles, the subtitle would have been "A Freshly-Fallen, Silent Shroud of Snow". I just spent two hours not getting to my Monday Night Class. I rather suspected that winter had at least one last surprise left.

For the information of those who do not keep records of Chicago's weather, it's Monday, April 5, and I'm late again. I should explain why I'm late by describing all the things which have been taking up my time lately. Unfortunately, while I had a very good time at the parties, shows, and other events, none of them makes an especially good story.

Other than the get-togethers scheduled every weekend in March and April, nothing much has been happening lately. I'm still in the same job, I still live in the same apartment, and I'm still working on my M. B. A. (Actually, it's an M. M., but they talk funny at Northwestern.)

I'm afraid most of my zine will be

MAILING COMMENTS

Transporter Topics by Rodford E. Smith: I'm at least safe from that form of Techie's Burden. I work in an engineering lab. ** I don't know about hand-held laser weapons. It seems to me that the energy needed to kill a man with a laser would be better spent throwing something at him.

The National Noid by Kip Williams:Can you imagine what would happen if the arm's former owner decided to believe the psychic explanations for phantom pains?** RAEBNC on the rest.

Compressed Verbiage by David D. Levine: RAEBNC

Rabbit Runes by John H. Frambach: RAEBNC

This Title Temporarily Closed for Renovation by Al Duester: ct Paul: It depends on your definitions of the terms "mediafan" and "mundane".

Package Tours on the Egger Route: You Can't Fire Me, I Quit by Gretchen Van Dorn: No comment.

All Space Available for Rent by Doug Van Dorn: One of the problems with being in an apa with people one sees regularly is that one reads zines which contain little one has not commented on in person. This turned out to be the case when I read your zine. Sorry. (How about that - - a four-line RAEBNC!)

Sing Ho! For the Life of a Bear by Paul Gadzikowski:RAEBNC

General Tektonics by Jeff Sekiya: Funny, 8 AM signups never caused me any trouble.
**ct Paul: Your analysis would be correct if the year had 364 days. Put in 365 everywhere you had 364.

Tektonic Jeff (cont.): The issue could become considerably more complicated if you make allowances for leap days.

Morning Perspectives by Bill Leininger: Sometimes I wonder if I'm the only chronic early riser in fandom. ** You don't intend to be critical of Ronnie? Why not? Besides, you should hear my brother. The most polite phrase I've ever heard him use about Reagan is something I'm not willing to print.

Rabbit Diesel Corona by Dick Smith: As a procrastinator myself, I'm not willing to complain too much about procrastinators. I also don't think that it's necessary to be too sticky about the minac rules in an apa with no waitlist.

Dr. Gonzo's Extravagant Extrapolations by Valli Hoski: RAEBNC

The Mubetan by Michael Brian Bentley: I'm afraid I'm going to do it to you, too. RAEBNC.

Harmonic Coefficients by W. Skeffington Higgins: ct Jamie: Having seen your zine for this issue, or at least some of it, I could commit that sin without postmailing. I don't think I will, though.

I Get a Real Bad Feeling About This . . . by Clif Flynt: Not all of Bill's advice is bad. ~~Just most of it.~~

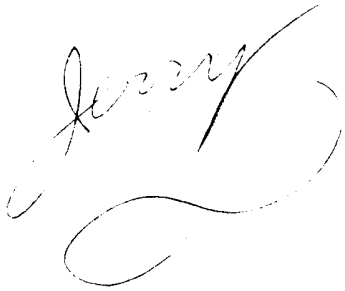
Young and Abroad in the Solar System byMichael Sestak:You make me wish that my copy of Apa-Tech #16 hadn't disappeared before I got a chance to read it. I don't like to comment on comments on things I haven't read.

The Jerry-Built Zine: Teenage Heaven Highway by Jerry Corrigan: A. 26=Letters of the Alphabet. B. 7=Wonders of the Ancient World. C. 1001=Arabian Nights. D. 12=Signs of the Zodiac. E. 54=Cards in a Deck (with the Jokers). F. 9=Planets in the Solar System. G. 88=Piano Keys. H. 13=Stripes on the American Flag. I. 32=Degrees Fahrenheit at which Water Freezes. J. 18=Holes on the Golf Course. K. 90=Degrees in a Right Angle. L. 200=Dollars to Pass Go in Monopoly. M. 8=Sides on a Stop Sign. N. 3=Blind Mice (See How They Run). O. 4=Quarts in a Gallon. P. 24=Hours in a Day. Q. 1=Wheels on a Unicycle. R. 5=Digits in a Zip Code. S. 57=Heinz Varieties. T. 11=Players on a Football Team. U. 1000=Words that a Picture is Worth. V. 29=Days in February in a Leap Year. W. 64=Squares on a Chess Board. X. 40=Days and Nights of the Great Flood. Y. 32=Chess Men. Z. 13=Baker's Dozen.

Meromorphic Melange by G. Ruffa: See the comment prior to the previous comment.

The Eighth Orbital by Jamie Hanrahan: RAEBNC.

One of these days I'm going to have to do one of these well in advance of the deadline. I might do something more than minac if I did. In any case, I have other promises to keep and rods to go before I sleep.



GUYLEM BAARDO?

****

A hurried spring bundle of MC's and miscellany from Bill Higgins. Must be Spinthairiscope Media publication number Sixteen, though I forgot to number the last one. The culprit may be cornered at 853 Lorlyn Drive, Apartment 1A, West Chicago, Illinois 60185. Phone: (312)293-1050. Office address is MS 344, Fermilab, Box 500, Batavia, Illinois 60510.

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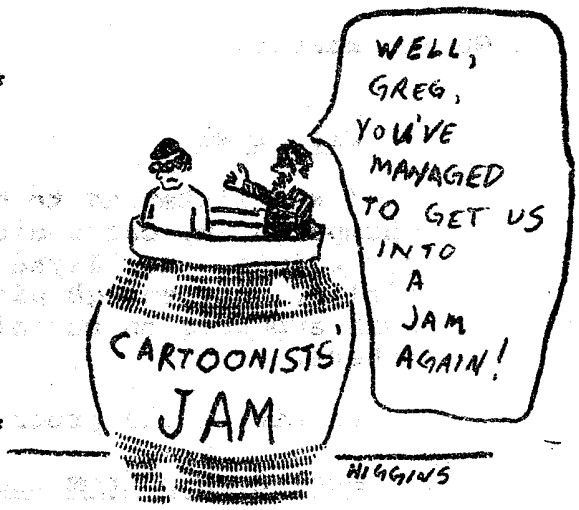


One Pill Makes You Louder

At the Capricon landing party (no room party appealed, so again we found a spot on a wide staircase between the sixth and seventh floors and sat down to play) I tossed Cecile Cloutier my kazoo. We played "White Rabbit" as a duet, I belting out the lyrics in my best shower-stall style and banging at the ukelele like a mad hatter. After the final chord died away, some wag on the top step called, "Now can we hear the acoustic version?"

Today's Fiction, Tomorrow's Trivia

The ChUSFA folks-- Jerry Corrigan, John Nine, Rolf Wilson, and lots of others-- did their usual fine job arranging a trivia contest at Capricon. With Rich Rostrom and Ken Manson I formed "The Thursday League of America." We competed against some good people, enjoyed ourselves, and managed to win. The brunch tickets for the winners were a nice touch.

Rolf had been talking about retiring from the contest-running game and competing again, and this started me thinking. How can we preserve the experience of running a good trivia bowl so there will always be people who do it well, even when the old hands decide to quit?

In microcosm this is the problem of continuing any fannish organized event, especially a convention. And we can see that even as established an entity as the Worldcon hasn't solved it completely.

I'd like to solicit ideas from all of you. How can we develop trivia bowl talent? Farm teams? The last few years have seen the publications of fanzines devoted to masquerades and filksinging, and even the Filkcons. Maybe a one-shot could summarize the wisdom of various experienced people for the benefit of future organizers. Maybe a more continuing presence is needed. Suggestions?

Classical

I was listening to good old Karl Haas on WILL out of Champaign (my car radio gets it) when he did a program on bad recordings. He played examples of poor engineering- too much violin, not enough piano-- and poor conducting which put too much emphasis on one element of the music at the expense of others.

He titled the program "Dins of Inequity."

More Gossip from the Void

If there's any interest out there I'll continue summarizing notable items from Aviation Week and Space Technology.

The Soviets have admitted what we'd guessed for several years: they are working on a winged reusable spacecraft to support their space-station program. They're shooting for $30 per kilogram to orbit. They also claim to be aiming for nuclear propulsion and for manned Mars exploration. (1 March)

JPL is looking at a cheaper Venus imaging radar probe with reduced capability compared to the canceled VOIR. The "Venus Mapper" would cover the planet with 1-kilometer resolution and cost about $120 million. It is hoped to get a start approved in the Fiscal 1984 budget. (15 March)

The Heritage Foundation's "High Frontier" study has proposed development of a bunch of space-defense systems to the government. As nearly as I can figure, these people are sort of grown-up L5ers with a strong concern for the military aspects of spaceflight. Retired Lt. Gen. Daniel Graham, former head of the Defense Intelligence Agency, directed the study-- so these guys are not amateurs.

The proposal includes a non-nuclear ABM silo defense system, a 432-satellite ABM network whose homing missiles would attack ICBMs in the boost phase, development of a fancier energy-weapon ABM ring, a small space tug to be carried in the shuttle, and that old favorite, a comprehensive civil defense program. (8 March)

(I was telling Barry Gehm about my concern that hawkish types were beginning to dominate the L5 Society's actions. First, they are convincing the more easygoing members that military superiority in space is vital, and second, all members are behaving like good Americans do during any gold rush: They want to get their hands in the pockets of the Department of Defense. Barry replied, "Zero-G makes strange bedfellows.")

LAST ISSUE'S GUEST ARTISTS: TUBBIO PRONI + GREG RUFFA. THANKS!

The ISEE-3 satellite has been hanging around one of the Earth-Moon libration points since 1978. It has enough fuel left to swing by the Moon in June of this year and intercept comet Giacobini-Zinner in September of 1985-- a year or so before Europe, Japan, and the USSR meet Halley's comet.

The probe is already paid for and has done much work, so the extra cost of the mission would be very low. It would return only particles and fields data, since it's a solar-wind measurement device with no imaging capacity. NASA brass will decide soon on whether to go ahead. (22 March)

Two NASA centers have been working out detailed proposals for permanent orbital facilities to grow gradually into full-blown manned space stations. The Marshall design would be based more on existing components such as Spacelab, while the Johnson version would be more flexible. Both would start with an unmanned power module of a few dozen kilowatts to support long-term instruments and experiments, and would eventually build up to manned modules. A specific plan for such a station will be presented to the President this summer. (15 February) (Later issues mention that the Europeans and Japanese are being asked to cooperate in the venture.)

Mailing Comments

Covers-- Glad you got to use both the Dickinson and the "random" cover.

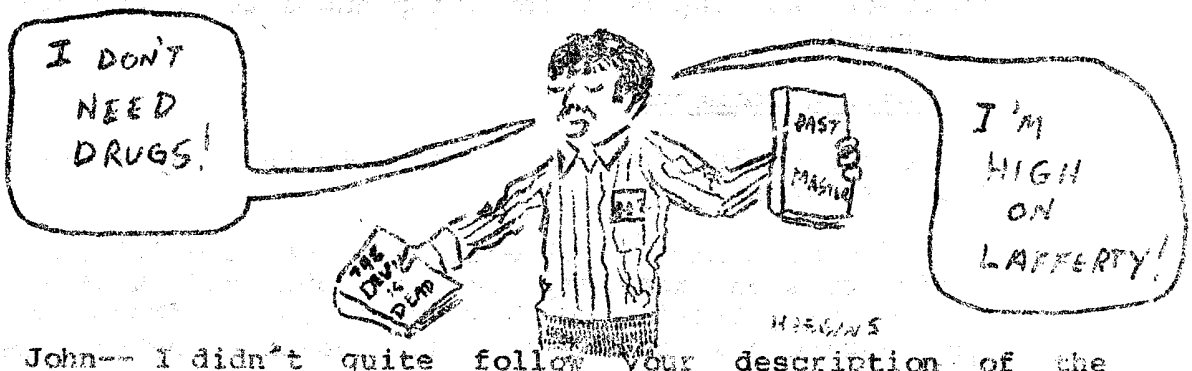
Rod-- Neat maps. But what is the significance of the roads outside Kentucky on your USA map? What fraction of out-of-state traffic do they bring in?// "NASA scientists" are engineers, but for some reason they've always been described popularly as scientists. This has only contributed to the under-recognition of the engineering profession in this country. Maybe what we need is a new I.K. Brunel... (Meanwhile the real scientists also resent the misrepresentation.)// A manned shuttle with a 2000-lb payload capacity to LEO strikes me as far from flexible. It wouldn't be more than a straight Delta replacement, and couldn't get more than about 1400 pounds up to escape velocity. Customers with bigger payloads would be forced to go to the bigger boosters. Could be that a payload two or three times bigger would have a good market, though. There must be room for cargoes smaller than the mammoth 65,000 pounds the Shuttle is meant to lift.

Please tell us who Osamu Tezuka is. // Plastic covers on the screens of the Sony monitors around here are clouded from radiation damage in the corners which usually hold bright lettering, since they are left on 24 hours a day. // Bet you won't find helium fluoride crystals in any but the most deluxe chemistry sets. Think about halogens and noble gases...

Kip (are you reading this?)-- Nice to see you back. Mr. Ed probably has lots of fans in space, as his series (broadcast from 1960 to 1966) is now being seen first-run in a spherical shell between sixteen and twenty-two light-years from the Earth. I'd hoped to give you a list of the stellar systems this would encompass, but the deadline precludes research. // I heard Gershon Kingsley and the First (and presumably last) Moog Quartet years ago at the Miami Marine Stadium. // I'm thinking about a mdz (mundanezine) myself....

Dave-- You mean Infamous Hyatt Varlet Parking Garage. // There is no especially good reason to read Herbert's series beyond Dune. // I liked your Achilles and the Tortoise, but I'm afraid your portrayal of Pooh seemed out of character. // I have come across "iceteroids" in other places, so presumably Rod didn't invent it first. It's easy to come up with independently, though. // I don't think anybody believes PyroTechnics can ever win a Hugo. I still want to see it on the ballot.

Jerry-- No comment but a cartoon:



John-- I didn't quite follow your description of the farmers' raid on the grain elevator.

Mike-- Dark Crystal (briefly, a whole movie full of Yodas) will be very impressive, and is exactly what the Muppets should be doing next. I hear it'll be released in November.

Valli-- Maxwell Grant is the house name for Street & Smith's Shadow adventures. It is usually identified with the prodigious Walter Gibson, who wrote 282 60,000-word novels between 1931 and 1949, including the first 112 consecutively. Every two weeks. Another notable pulphack was Lester Dent, who as "Kenneth Robeson" wrote most of the Doc Savage novels.

Cliff-- Both Bill Roper and Barry Gehm, credits to fandom, are trained as chemists, and Barry still practices in the lab.// There are plenty of non-fans in the world who might catch your literary references. Maybe you're looking in the wrong places.

ANGEL -- BRILLIANT TITLE.

Greg-- re the Cartoon Jam: Yeah! Let's do it again! I for one enjoyed it a lot. And it was at least as aleatoric as your apazine. (Let them look it up; I had to...) // Late word is that a proposed amendment to the WSFS Constitution would abolish the Midwest region for Worldcon site selection, establish a Deep South instead, and parcel out remaining cities to the East and West Coasts. Come to the Business Meeting, and you may find that Midwest versus Deep South loathings aren't evaporating as fast as you think. // The "No Name" restaurant must have been a favorite haunt of H.P. Lovecraft, where he regularly dined on Nameless Things. // Sure, tell me what I can see through my 10X scope. // Come on, if you can get to Barnard's Star you can get to Alpha Centauri! I think the Daedalus people wanted to do more than just a minimal system. If you can build a BS probe, in fact, perhaps you can send it to AC and slow it down a bit on the way, to give you more time in the target system. (Um, I guess we didn't mention that Daedalus would whip through the BS sytem at interstellar speeds, spending only a few hours after a fifty-year trip.)

Jamie-- Liked your discussion of TV/movie fen.// My comment to you was, "But code 'SMOOTH.ZERO' may run in one K." It's not that baffling. Anybody with an ounce of initiative an a gram of ingenuity can understand it.// As for "True Names," I didn't think the essentially telepathic interfacing equipment in the story was realistic or strictly necessary; Dick didn't think it was unreasonable. How about you?

Misha-- Keep contributing; I still think you're submitting more often than certain OEs I could name. // To avoid the parking bumps, when I visit you I think I'll just come in a VTOL.// You may be right about the feminists. Some feminist group scheduled a lunchtime debate on the ERA here at the lab. It turned out that nobody who opposed the amendment had been invited, and we could only hear their arguments in favor. My friends and I, who felt a need for learning more about both sides of the issue, felt cheated. // Uh, in "Tailfins" I had a lot to say. I wanted to cover a lot of neat things that had happened to me, and put in more about my personal life than normally finds its way into this apa. I expect to get that long-winded only on special occasions in the future. Wasn't there an old member of AZAPA, who rejoined about 1978, who used to do forty- or sixty-page zines all the time?// Galbraith (reviewed lastish) discusses his admiration for Eric Hodgkins in his autobiography. They were both staff writers for Fortune after the war. I don't know about any science books, but I'll keep an eye out.

Al-- Thanks for the lyrics.// Re Raiders: The Hugos have never been restricted to SF, and the film is certainly fantasy.// Mundane friends? Renee used to kid me about my constant references to the exploits of people she'd never met. When after some years I introduced her to two of them,

she was taken aback to realize that they had been hearing similar tales about her.

Gretchen-- Sorry to see you go. I hope something else engages your enthusiasm soon.

Doug-- The Halley's Comet missions, both cheap and expensive versions, are quite dead, and NASA funding for ground-based observations is waning. Perhaps the crazy G-Z comet mission will succeed.

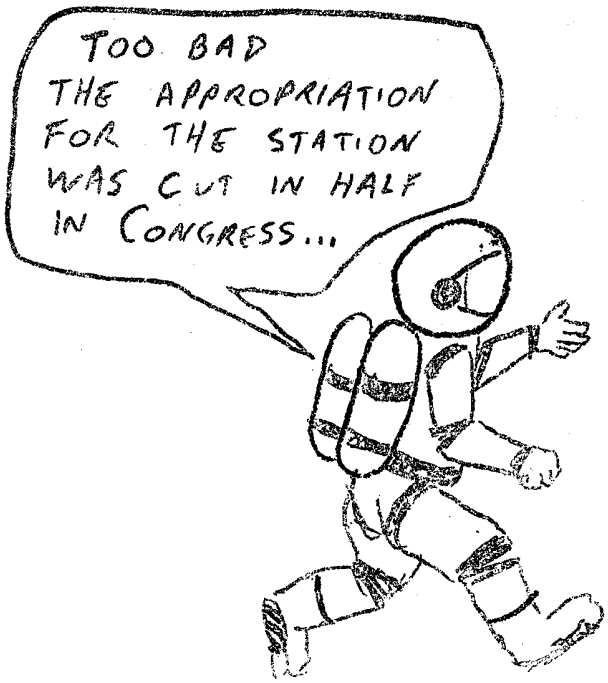
Paul-- Your comment to Angel made me laugh aloud. I was in the same room, too.// re fannish Pauls: How about Paul Westerfield, former PFRCer in Houghton and now in Ohio State's computer science grad school? He's not very famous in these parts, but has occasionally cartooned for Pyro.

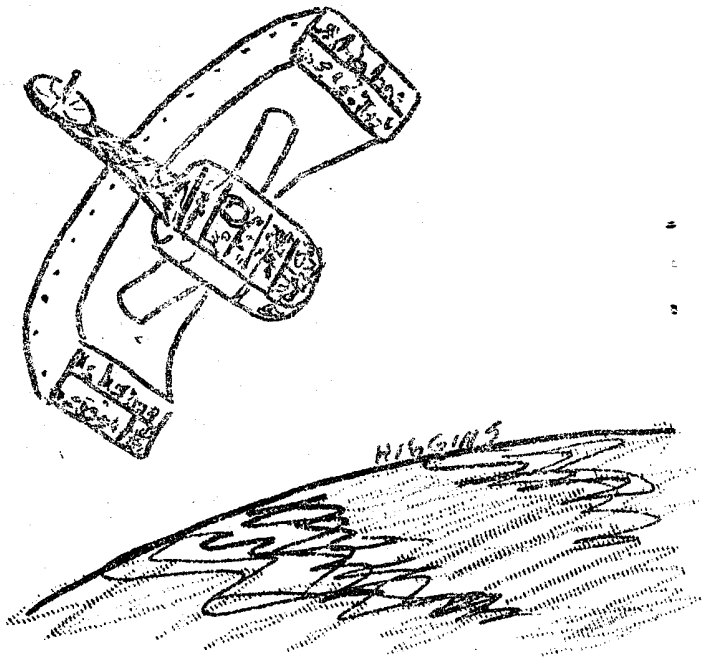
Jeff-- It is a disappointment that Hog-Butcher-for-the-Worldcon, conceived by the self-appointed saviors of worldcons, doesn't have its act together any better than the others. The naive among us expected more.// Yeah, the SF world is indeed getting "series happy." Too bad.

Bill L.-- "It was difficult to get (WILL) due to antenna damage..." Theirs or yours?// I like John Berkey the way he is, thank you, though I also enjoy Syd Mead.

Dick-- Liked the Diesel Corona, although very small lettering such as that on the four-cycle diagram was unreadable.

Rolf-- Congratulations on your March Physics Today cover. I'll have to defer discussion of the marvelous Tipler vs. Everybody slugfest in the same issue until later.





its back to that old dittozine for this issue, as it's Saturday morning and I can't get at the usual typer for my zines. So let's get nostalgic, and remember the humble ditto master ~~[illegible]~~.

Coming your starry-eyed way once again from Valli Hoski, of 1116 Hull Terrace, Evanston IL 60202 and (312) 864-3504, for March/April 1982 for the occasional membership of ApaTech 18.

What Wonders Hath the Shalmaneser Wought?

Comments and general diatribes being written about A/T 17 to the accompaniment of the Saturday morning ~~[illegible]~~ cartoons about various super-heroes and super-meanies. What ever happened to Mighty Mouse and Chip & Dale?

Cover Very nice stuff! I hadn't realized that color xerox had reached that quality. Thanks Al, I might even remove it from the apa and put it up in my office.

ToC Very dassy stuff, Gary. Gee I care barely hope that people can read my writing. Your printing is in an art form all by itself, like Kip Williams'. Thanks for going through all the work and getting an apa out in the midst of a con, which cannot be the easiest (nor most fun) thing to do.

Rod Re yr ct me re my zine's staples: I had meant for the zine to face outward, not in towards the staples, but I didn't do the collating,and lost the staple war.

(side note about Sat. morning funnies: while watching Space Ghost, I was struck by the sheer nerdity of some of these pseudo-sf plots. But if these shows were this sf oriented when I was a kiddie, I guess I have been exposed to more pulp plots than I previously thought.)

Kip I really like the look of your zines. Good to see you here again, hope you come again soon.//Liked your out of the Ether logo. Actually I liked all of your logos but that one was really good.//I don't mean to suh all over about your zine, but I do like different graphic styles, and yours is one of the more innovative that I have seen. Cecile Cloutier does neat ones too.// Hm, while I have never been a n aficionado of wrestling matches, I do have some stories from a friend's family who were real TV wrestling gans. Sort of "Strange But True" stuff. And of course, there was the Theme song for the hockey games, which no one could identify but 3 yr. old Bobby insisted was the theme. Ah, it seems that with all the Detroit and Windsor broadcast hockey games that Bobby saw, he recognized the Star Spangled Banner, but of course, thought that Oh Canada was the hockey theme song.//More National Noids, please.

David Here it is only the end of March, and Windycon seem eons ago. It snowed here agin last night, so the snow has not receded into thememory dustbin for a notter season, but the con is now one of those hazy long-ago events. Glad that you had a good time, although you were only briefly there. The one Great Thing that I remember from the G_T goings-on was the great one-liner pulled on me by a venerable and legendary G_T figure. For more details, talk to either Keith Thorne or myself (I can't recall who exactly was there) and oh yes, Chris Cloutier.//ARCHITECTURE?? History of Architecture? I didn't realize that there was someone else in G_T who had an interest/avocation on those areas! As Art History was part of my undergrad major, I am rather fascinated by architectural history, but didn't know that anyone elsein G_T was interested. //I have not seen the Rubik's Tetrahedron yet. There usually seem to be several snakes in attendance at most parties lately. //Re yr cts me: yes, the zine was missplaced during collating. It was supposed to be facing out, not in. The waitlisters apa finally got started and its called CAPACITY and for more info. contact MikeWalsh, now presently at 2000 Birchwood, #2 Chicago IL 60645 (but that is expected to change imminently). Next deadline is Thurs., Ap. 1, and the next is 6 wks. after that. Let's see what the GTB does this ish about their lack of activity. This zine is not up to my usual verbosity as my old typer at homedoes notallow me to type quite as quiddy as the Selectric I usually use does. Hence, I still miss an occasional space or letters get crowded because I am typing too fast. Ah well, amazing how technology spoils us. I have read the story Sandkings incidentally, but didn't have nightmares after it, probably because I was only skimming it, after having been forewarned by Dick.//Tec-Man? Argh!! (But cute, tho).

John After finally meeting you (and yes, I do recall seeing you around some techiebbashes or other), welcome to the apa. How did the Continuation storm hit Sawyer, and how long did it take to dig out? It was all rathe r anticlimacti cominghome to Evanston and finding very little snow. Made me feel like a real adventurere surviving being snowed in with a bunch of other fen (oh such adventure! such hardy souls!) who has returned home to the balmy islands.

Al Yes, the extra day at Confusion was nice. The delight expressed by many fen who were dancing in the lobby singing "We have to stay...we have to stay" was amazing. Definitely one of those cons of which legends and fliksongs are made.//Re yr ct me re Shuttle watching: well, everyone was gluded to the TV and wewould have distracted the waitress, so we didn't get anything. Also, we were inside for maybe only the last minute before the touch-down, and then left about 1½ minutes later. We were running off on our way to a wedding, so gulping a beer in 3 minutes wasn't such a great idea. If I every go past the establishment again however, I will repay the proprietor for his kind hospitality by buying a beer (or 2) then.

Gretchen *sigh* Another one lost to the cause. I am not sure ifyou will see this or not, but as I think Doug is still a member, he can pass it on to you. I am saddened by seeing someone who has as much talent as you leaving, but I can understand why, having heard a goodly number of the reasons in person (and some in print). There are those of us who do not read all of the apa, or don'tcomment on all we read because either 1. we don't understand or 2. we can't say anything about the technical stuff or 3. don't want to. So you aren't alone in that camp. I have gotten rather bored with A/T at times, wondering what I was doing handing around when there seemed to be pages and pages of stuff that some people got really excited over, and I barely understood a word of it at all. But I just keep spieling the ramblings out, and if other people are disturbed by my general lack of techiness or hard data in my zines, well, Ihaven't heard it. The problem with the lead times between zines and/or issue of A/T is a problem which is still being hashed out. I can very wellsympathize with the pain and effort inv ved in getting an apa out on time, as you can as well considering WindyApa. But there comes a timewhen the delays get really riduculous, and people just stop writing znes because Roscoe knows when the apa will get out. Again however this seems to be gettig settled. I still find that I read A/T more religiously than Pyro because at least here I find out what people have been out and up to, whereas Pyro gets a bit, er, dogmatic. Anyway, sad to see you go, but I understand. Keep them weird stuffed critters coming in the art shows, and the nice costumes, ok?

Doug I will have you know that your Mt. PaloOMine has me thoroughly confused everytime I try and say Mt. Palomar. See what your creative humor does to your friends? It boggles 'em! ~~As/if/I/need/to/make/a/public/fool/of/myself/even/more!~~ Re yr ct Jamie: one ~~dis~~advantage of the deadline/disty for WindyApa is that is it is there: I procrastinate enuf on mailing the damn things out. If I had an open date to get the apa out and distied, it would take me forever probably. The Thursday night disty is rather irrevocable. It has to come out then, classy ToC done or not, allof Dick's ditto stuff reproed or not. It might not come out until 10 PM but it has to get distied. And there have been members who have survived lacktivity by their very chinny-cin-chins too. Lets see how issue 15 comes out, and then we can brag. ~~Hinthint~~ Besides could itbe that sex has more to comment on than derivations?

Paul Ah yes, the look on your face was worth a million ~~Klingons, Princess Leia Kisses, Hans Solo Kisses~~, whatevery you prefer. Besides its fun being nice to people who are very nice themselves.//Re yr ct me re liking Milwaukee: good, if you like it too, then you can come on the next frozen custard expedition up there.//Re yr ct me re Jerry's car: actually, I heard the story only 5 minutes after Mike walked (stumbled?) into the con, and then several times over. But thats ok, the retelling may have helped make the whole thing less traumatic andthat is what friends' ears are for (as you well know).

Jeff Welcome again, and good luck with the job market. At least we will get your COA (when/where it comes) throgh A/T. I have managed to lose track of various fen unless we are in apas together.//Re yr ct me: at least I wasn't humming the Zero G Polka as the Shuttle landed.

Bill I really like your illo. Was that an original, or who dunnit? (Ah she says as she turns to the back page, that is a Gadzikowski as it looked like. Hokay.)//Personally I think Chicago would be a lot better off belonging to either Wisconsin or Michigan. I am tired of these rural midwest states that think the big cities are mean, vil and nasty and should be screwed over as much as possible in the state legislature. By these midwest rural states I mean Illinois and Indiana. I am sickof the rural hicksters telling Chicago that the CTA/RTA are on their own, while Chicago tax $$ are going to subsidize the Springfield bus system so that our loyal legislators and their aides/secretaries/clerks can ride the buses for .50¢ while Chicago has to steadily increase their fares to meet theexpenses. I say shut the Danville, SPrignfield, etc. subsidies down and make them pay what Chicago pays. Enough of this ranting. I have lost my tolerance for rural closed-mindedness is the problem. Shampoo-Banana is a good town, as is Bloomington, Ind. but the rest of the rural midwest is not to my taste.//

Dick Real classy zine there. I'm glad that I canmake the xerox copies for you that made your thermals look so nice.//However the green ditto just didn't makeit quite right.//Problem is that the illos on your last page, is the living room <u>before</u> you start taking your car apart!

Mike B. Glad you made it to Ishercon and had a good time. With all the shananigans and such regarding this yr's and who could and could not come, I'm glad that someone had a good time. I was thinking of dropping by on Saturday but was too comfortable up in Winsconsin to drive the 6 hrs. through the falling snow. I think that planning for this year's honorary Ishercon should begin soon, so as not to burden the Isher folks with any unwanted crowds but yet allow everyone to party with the G_T folks they would like to without offense of overcrowding anyone out. There are certainly unuf In and Out groups in fandom without G_T splintering that way too. Some folks have gotten used to spending New Year's with the techies, and it would be nice if next year wasn't another tug-of-egos over who fits and who doesn't.//I like Phil's Starside covers. I even like the people of Starside too.

Bill H. Gads what are you going to do with all these fen in Oak Park now? We'll have to find a Belden's south I guess.// Thanks for the Fermi tour. Now I finally know what you folks are talking about, a litt bit.//Bill Higgins a trufan? So when will you declare yourself a SMOF??//I now have a copy of <u>Way Things Work</u> vol. 1 & 2, <u>Way Body Works</u>, and <u>Colubia Encyc.</u> At least its not sf.

<u>Clif</u> - Welcome. ++ <u>Confusion Collab.</u> - Good stuff. ++ <u>Rod</u> - Jeff tried to show me how to make a blinkie once. Iwill someday. <u>Jerry</u> - You distracted at a con? Gee that may be a good story or two from you. <u>Greg</u> - Doug and I watched the 3d lauch at Wards' TV dept. 3 dozen lauches and playbacks. Great stuff. When does midwest fandom get 2 CU?

<u>Namie</u> - re yr ct re my zine content: thanks, it helps, it really does. That's everyone! bye!

A MORAL TALE

by Renee Sieber of 525 W. Walnut St., Kalamazoo, MI 49007 (616) 344-1183. I can also be reached at Marty's number, (616) 344-1821.

I'm sitting here, listening to Prarie Home Companion, and trying to conjure up the words on this page so that I don't have to type them in. I sorely hate typing and I sorely hate composing but I figure that it's good for the soul. So here I am again chained to this keyboard, plunking away.

Had someone asked me a few months ago what I was doing with my time I would have given an answer that I've been using for the past three and a half years. "Making rayguns and going to conventions." That's all changed. I'll try to give you the reasons and the motivations behind the change.

I suppose that I should start by giving you an idea of what it was like in the beginning.

Throwing caution to the wind and my prospects of graduate school, I graduated MSU in 1978 and left East Lansing to live with Tullio and start Isher Enterprises. Fresh out of the ivory tower, I was pretty romantic and idealistic. I had all sorts of ideas on what it would be like to start up a new business and live with a group of people (at the time there were only the two of us but we were planning to have more living with us in the future.) I dreamed of starting a commune of people living and working together with the same goals and ideals. I wanted to found a company where I would be my own boss, that could be made successful, and that would freak people out. I didn't think it would be easy. It would be tough and take a lot of patience to foster. I had my dreams to bolster me, though. And such wonderful dreams they were.

I had worked for Tullio the summer before, so I had some idea of the routine. We would get up in the morning (no cracks about morning, now) and go to the lab. There I would work, in the basement of a converted basket factory (now the Foundation for Behavioral Research) for 5 hours turning out my 5 handles (yep, in them days it took a hour to build a handle.) Then we'd go home, eat a piece of meat sauted in Worcheshire sauce, minestrone soup, and spaghetti. Every night. We'd assemble rayguns until bedtime. Or talk. The next morning we'd repeat the very same routine again. With a rigid schedule like that in place now I felt that we could become moderately successful in a short while.

For some reason, that's not what happened when we started. I don't now whether it was because I resisted the schedule or because Tullio assumed that a schedule was no longer necessary now that we were partners. Probably some of each and other reasons too. The routine disappeared. Suddenly there were no pressures to work. One had to be motivated to get things done. What's that? It took me four years to get barely respectable studying habits. Now I needed to manufacture self-discipline. I just didn't have it. It would turn out to be a long and

painful process to get some. Painful to everyone.

NOTE: If you ever start your own business make sure that you have self-discipline. You have to force yourself out of bed at a certain time and get to work. You have to be devoted to your business, able to work many hours without getting distracted. You have to work those many hours because you have to assume all the jobs: secretary, technician, salesperson, marketing, etc. And at some point you have to be able to stop working and play. I could give a lot of advice about starting and operating a small business (I will, later on) but I've had to learn this through bitter experience so this advice means a lot to me. If you don't have self-discipline don't bother working for yourself.

So we worked on Isher and it didn't work the way I thought it would. Alex joined us and so we had a commune of sorts. Then I joined Alex and the commune was strained. The company grew but oh, so slowly and we had to scrape for every new machine. It didn't net enough to support even one person. Since the three of us lived off of it, Tullio's part-time job, and what Alex could bring in on occasional jobs, we lived poorly. Personalities clashed. Because our relationship was strained, Tullio started losing interest in the company. But we still kept trying.

As I watched the seasons change from behind a pane of glass I changed. I got to be more responsible, more motivated to do the awful work as well as the fun work. I started the slow process of learning how to take care of my albatrosses (well, maybe now I stare at them from across the room instead of wearing them.) I learned the basics of running --and how not to run-- a small business. And I got so awfully sober in the process.

As I felt more responsibilty towards the Company, I got more responsibility. Alex got a job and let it be known that he wanted to make rayguns no longer (even though he continued to help long afterwards.) Tullio let it be known that he wanted to be in R&D only and didn't want to be involved in the assembly line work. So I was responsible for getting the standard plastic models completed. I handled the bookeeping. I kept track of the mailorders. I answered the standard letters.

So what did I discover just when it looked like Isher would start to roll? That I got no kick out of making rayguns. Making one or two is creative and flexes your imagination but making 100 bodies, then 100 handles, then 100 flash units is not. And what did I get for my trouble? I came to the realization that Isher was synonymous with Tullio Proni. No matter what I did he got the credit. He didn't actively encourage it. It was just that most everyone assumed that he had done all the work. Even with things that I had developed myself, people would come up to the table and say, "Oh, Tullio's come up with a new product." My whole identity was linked with

Isher and I wasn't getting any egoboo. My self-worth eroded severly.

I felt that I had to work all the time. Now no one can accuse me of being a hard worker but you have to be self-employed to understand how this feels. There is no physical distinction between work and play when you work for yourself (especially when the workshop is in the basement and the lab is next to the bedrooms.) So I could never really relax without feeling that there was a cloud hanging over me, that I should be working instead of enjoying myself. It ate away at me.

Finally, instead of people dropping their jaws when I told them about my occupation they raised their eyebrows and stared at me as though they had just asked me, "Okay, so what are you going to do when you grow up?" I couldn't justify my lifestyle anymore.

When Donna came to live with us there were problems which intensified my doubts. It was an unfortunate situation. Tullio, Alex, and I all came to Isher to live together. We came to work together. Donna had come to live with Tullio and work with Tullio. Whether she wanted to or not, she had to live with us and work with me. I had to accept her as a full partner. We all had no choice.

Perhaps if there had been free will it would have been different. We might have been able to get along. But we were being forced to get along. At the time we were also having meetings to restructure the company to make it more formal. Arguing over policy added to the fire.

In the middle of January I decided to leave the company. Since I owned 50% of it, it had to be dissolved. We had to work out a settlement. With the help of our accountant we figured out the worth of the company, divided it in half, and subtracted the difference in our partner draws. Tullio claimed that I owed him room and board for the 2 years that he had supported me while I worked on Isher. I settled for a small sum of money and he got full ownership of the company (including some $300 in debts).

I realized that it would never be the same, me living there but not working there. So about a month later Alex and I decided to move. Now we faced the breakup of the household and the division of all the commonly held items. We are settling that this week. By the time that you receive this we will be completely moved out of the House of Isher.

Well, this is the regrets section. What do I regret? I regret that it didn't work out. It was a noble effort and deserved a try. We tried it. I regret that I treated my foibles so lightly when we started. I regret that there never was, and never will be, enough egoboo for everyone. And I regret feeling so aged by the experience.

There are many moments that I will treasure. The egoboo that I did get. The summer that Angel apprenticed with us and

that magical trip to San Francisco. The very first Ishercon with the butter, the antennae, and the mylar tape. The 3 Ishercons that followed and what made each of them special. The fashion show where we supplied the guns to the dancers. The mailorders that we got from Japan, Ringling Bros., and Barry Gibb. The look on my dad's face when I told him that we'd made $4000 at a convention. The pride I felt at acquiring each new machine.The sense of solidarity that we felt that made us feel strong, that made us feel what we were trying to accomplish was important and would survive. This is what I will remember when I think of Isher. Unpleasant memories seem to fade and blur with the passage of time. These good moments and strong and vibrant and will last.

There are those of you who will be saying, "Renee, why the hell did you do it? Didn't you know what you were getting into? Why were you so naive as to think it would work?" Those are hard questions to answer; the answer to which are not going to satisfy most of you. I did it because I had to take the risk. I could leave graduate school, give up the prospect of a career in the sciences, give up a good relationship. But I couldn't take the chance of missing something wonderful, something that would satisfy my dreams of being an important part of something bigger than myself. Those chances come along so rarely. You either have to leap for them or forever wonder what might have been. I had to do it.

I learned a lot in those three and one half years. I learned some machining and some bookeeping. With what I learned about running a small business I some things not to do. I know that I should have to be forced at gunpoint to get a partnership with one of my friends. If I do, we'd better be able to criticize each other. We should not let business life and personal life mingle. We should give each other space and not be in each other's pockets. We should respect each other's right to form traditional relationships. About myself I learned that changing is a long, tortuous process and I have to work at it constantly, a little bit at a time.

What else can I say? It certainly has been an interesting three and one half years. It probably wouldn't have been as strange if I had been working a regular job. I at least got to see more places than I would have otherwise. I met a lot of wonderful people. I got into weird personal situations and I grew up a little. Was I crazy to do this? Well, I think that in that final moment as I walk away from that house that was home, work, identity, The House of Isher (now referred to as The House Across the Street) I will probably pause and say, "Yes, but I'm glad I did it anyway."

Conventional Mental Overload
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Upon returning from Capricon, I found, lurking in my mailbox, what purports to be issue #17 or so of Apa-Tech. Being of a not particularly sound mind or body, I opened it immediately, and started reading. But, I've recovered now, and am going to start making my replys, rebuttals, and comments to and fro.

First, Capricon was a fun weekend, the Mobius presentation was the high spot, but the weekend had other high spots as well. Better Late than Never is probably the worst shaggy dog story I've ever been exposed to, and I loved every minute of it.

Another high point was the GT landing party. One of the things I like about fandom is the cliquishness. This ought to raise a few hackles, but let me explain. Every so often, I reach a point where the cons start to seem the same. I go to a con, see the usual people, talk about the usual stuff, go out to the usual type of restaurant, and hit the same old filk. But, after this starts to seem monotonous, and I wonder if it's time to gaffiate, I wander down the hall, and suddenly, theres another group of people, with a similar but slightly different warped way of looking at the universe, a new set of stories, jokes, songs, and projects, life is new and wonderful again, and I'm stuck in Fandom for another 6 or 7 years.

Every so often I could just wax poetic about the joys of an ever-changing universe... More often, I curse it as something that used to work stops.

The contribution I had in last apa was written a year ago, and just finally given to Greg at Confusion, so I'll update some of the stuff in it a little.

I am not starting a new job on April Fools day, that was last year. It was a fun job, but I'm glad it's over. I now work for a company called GEO-SPECTRA. We analyze remote sensing data for oil/mineral companies and small countries. The backbone of our work is done on land-sat data, but we've recently been getting some of the seven-channel/ 30 meter resolution stuff from the DAEDELUS aircraft scanner. That's the same scanner that will go up on LANDSAT D. Ooooohhh, is it pretty! With a little bit of pushing, we can see the cars on the road, and even found the construction of the superhighway around Omaha. The 7 channels of data are the three primary visual colors, red, green, and blue, and 3 reflected IR bands, and one long IR band that's thermal emmision.

The other thing we're getting into is computer analysis of Electrophoresis Gels. Upjohn recently (a year ago) came up with a stain that would color different protiens different colors (instead of coloring everything different shades of the same color). This opens the door for some really nice identifications. I think it's going to do a lot for genetic engineering, and hospital diagnostics.

The company is small, about 16 people, but growing. Any computer jocks or geologists want to relocate to Ann Arbor?

We're also looking at Robotic Vision. Tomorrow I go to Detroit for

the Robotics show, and see where we can fit in. If no one is doing it yet, I like the idea of a vidicon tube sensor, and a map that knows how things should look, so the poor robot can tell if there's a tech. standing between him and the place he's going. There's at least one tech who would have liked that.

And, now on to mailing comments...

COMPRESSED VERBIAGE: Dave, re yr QUESTION TO THE GENERAL POPULATION. (a way to identify a good character). I've always liked the test of whether you'd recognize the character if you met him/her/it on a street corner. That one slices off a lot of poor, predictable stereo-types.

Regarding RNO, (yr ct SMITH'S CORONA) you can leave blanks in RNO, it has a command for it. I don't know of an implementation of RNO for a micro, but my zine is done with a look-alike I wrote for the TRS-80. It's not a full implementation, but it serves. (At least, it can dish it out).

I like your thought about the augmented binoculars.

*** SOAP-BOX ALERT ***

That's to warn people that I'm about to climb on a soapbox. Weapons policy is a matter I've given a little incoherent thought to, and I'm going to share that thought.

I'm uncertain which of these are causes and which are effects, but this is my analysis of why there is a weapons problem.

First off, traditional space opera is violent. Weapons play a huge part in the gosh-wow of our early literate heritage.Consequently, we identify our hero's and role models with their weaponry. The simplest space opera to write has a hero who's quicker with his trigger finger than with his wits.

For the purpose of further discussion, Fandom (and humanity in general) will be divided into two straw men. Those who are Cool, being characterized by doing interesting, neat things, and not caring if they're Cool; and those who want to be Cool, characterized by doing the things that Cool people do so they can be neat and nifty, too.

Now, we return to fandom, and, several years back, we find Cool people doing neat stuff, Dorsai buffs looking mean and vicious, techies building blasters, SCA types carrying replica medieval weaponry, and model makers doing very nice imitations of conventional weaponry.

No great problem, another characteristic of the straw-man Cool person is that he/she doesn't cause waves. The Dorsai only look mean a little, and carry lollipop bandoliers, the techies stage blaster duels in empty corridors, the SCA and model maker types keep their weaponry sheathed.

Now, the problem, the would-be-cool types look at the Cool types and say, 'So and So is Cool. What's he/she doing that makes him/her Cool? Why he/she is Dorsai/carrying a blaster/wearing a broadsword/-replica anti-tank gun. I can get ... and I'll be cool, too.'

These are the people who buy a black beanie and talk mean, show you the high-power strobe blaster three inches from your eyes, and keep thier sword 'right' (sharp, oiled, and worn without a sheath).

Weapons policy won't work (although it may be the only stop-gap) because these are the people who will scream and shout about their right to be obnoxious. At best, it's trying to legislate morality. The problem is identifying weaponry with Coolness.

This is why I like your binoculars. They sound neat, nifty, honest to god Cool, and people who choose you as a Cool model will be

non-dangerous.

There's a lot of non-weapon s.f. gadgetry that can be built. Anybody interested in a 5-10 year sociological experiment?

*** end of tirade ***

One last word, before people accuse me of being a knee-jerk liberal. I oppose Gun Control Legislation in the Mundane world. You can't legislate morality and/or public attitudes.

TITLE CLOSED FOR RENOVATIONS: re yr ct to SAY WATT's ct re JERRY re phosphor ranges/resolution. (pop the stack three times and jump). The system I work on uses 16 bits for color display on the video. 5 bits each for red/green/blue, and one for the cursor on/off The justification for that was that 5 bits gives about as much data as the screen can display, and you can see on it. This gives a very nice image, and when we put a 35 mm slide through our digitizing scanner, it looks as good or better than a TV image from a regular TV. (we use 525 by 465 pixels for our image).

SING HO: re yr ct ROD re Hypoglycemia and sweet tooth. I recall reading someplace the claim that sweet tooth derives from those early days of no dental care, when if you ate something sweet, the sugar could get stuck in a cavity, decay to lactic acid, and create a nice pow and the acid flowed over the exposed nerve endings.

GENERAL TECTONICS: Aha!! another fannish bicycle rider. Do you realize that I've found more ex-chemist computer jocks who write filk songs than I've found fen who cycle-tour.

I haven't done much since graduation (gah 5 years?) but plan on taking a week about June and touring the northern part of the lower Mich. penninsula.

MORNING PERSPECTIVES: Re electronic cameras. That 570 by 490 is better resolution than you get on most TVs, and better than any home computer is presently offering. You can get an S-100 board set that allows 512x512 by 8 bits/color for about 6000 to tack onto a personal system, but it makes a damn expensive slide viewer.

GEOSPECTRA is looking a little at home computer video. There are some simple image enhancements that could be done by an apple, or even a TRS in a reasonable time (tricky stuff, like mapping images over each other, or principle component analysis would take about a week). But, as an example, I used a slide of a football game taken from one end of the U of M stadium and showing the football players and viewers of the other side of the stadium when I was testing our new digitizing scanner. By doing a fairly simple non-linear stretch, we discovered that a person on the far side of the stands who looked like he was wearing a dark jacket, was actually wearing a dark-green vest over a blue sweater.

What there might be room for in the economic marketplace is a company that will take your electronic camera disk, clean up the pictures, and transfer them to a video-tape for easy playback on your TV video recorder.

re people doing work with CCD devices. I understand TI has built a CCD matrix something like 800x800 pixels. They aren't sure yet if there's a real market for the chip, so it's not in production.

re Reagan. I agree. The states can't implement many policies. The feds have to declare things like pollution and workplace standards, A state that tries to make a company conform to the rules will just have an empty building and a tax loss as they move to a state that

doesn't care.

EIGHTH ORBITAL: re VMU/ "eunice". The place I work at is intending to buy me a new toy, with VAX at the top of my list. Can you steer me towards more info on VMS vx eunice vs UNIX?

re Discussion groups vs panels. At a couple of the early Syracuse Conventions (there were no late Syr. cons, they died) we tried to set up informal discussion groupings with a sign up sheet. Put up a topic of interest and a place/time to be to discuss it. It failed dismally. I think one entry was actually written up, and it was the seed we put in to start things rolling, and nobody even came to that one. When it comes to meeting people and getting involved in discussions, I generally do it in a hallway, huckster room, occaissionally an art-show, and more rarely, a party or con-suite. Meals are good, too.

I believe that's minac and then some. I had to wait once for the memory to dump to disk, and I think this program has a 20 K text buffer. I may be at MINI-CON, definitely at MARCON and Ad ASTRA II, maybe even MIDWESTCON.

Songs for biochemists

Newly arrived from London is "The Biochemists' Songbook," an offering of Pergamon Press. Author Harold Baum of the University of London dedicated the volume "To Professor Sir Hans Krebs, F.R.S., in honour of his 80th birthday and to my wife Glenda, who only nags me for my own good." Krebs, noblesse oblige, contributed a foreword.

Baum says in his preface that for some years he has been expected to write a biochemical song for the departmental Christmas party. He is required to write it (to a well-known tune) "whilst travelling upstairs on the No. 22 bus between Putney Bridge and Manresa Road." The song is subjected to peer review "for biochemical rigour and for tolerable scansion" and ultimately is sung at the party by all hands.

Krebs recalls in his foreword that Cambridge Biochemical Laboratory published a journal called "Brighter Biochemistry" once a year from 1923 to 1931. Among the contributors was J. B. S. Haldane, who had the following to say about the inability of animals to photosynthesize:

"I cannot synthesize a bun
By simply sitting in the sun."

In any event, the book at hand contains 13 of Baum's compositions. Each selection comprises the words, the piano score (one is missing), and a technical description of the topic. For example, a ditty named "We're Here Because Urea" is accompanied by the music of "The Bold Gendarmes" from "Pirates of Penzance" and a detailed schematic of the urea cycle.

Baum's words tend toward the piquant. Note the following verse of "The Battle Hymn of the Aerobes," sung to "The Battle Hymn of the Republic":

"Mine eyes have seen the glory of respiratory chains
In every mitochondrion, intrinsic to membranes
Functionally organised in complex subdomains
Where electrons flow along.
Glory, glory, respiration! (three times)
Where electrons flow along."

Baum, or possibly Pergamon, wishing to overlook no opportunities, has included in the songbook a form you can use to indicate an interest in buying a cassette tape of the contents "in case you are unfamiliar with the tunes, or just want to entertain yourself and friends with some novel new arrangements."

Study of daddy longlegs turned to use on robots

You wouldn't think that the daddy longlegs, an arachnid of the order Phalangida, would be a promising role model for anything but another daddy longlegs, but you would be wrong. Knowledge of the eight-legged bug acquired by biologist Robert Franklin at the University of Oregon is being used to help engineers learn how to control joint coordination in robots.

Franklin consulted recently with roboticist Robert McGhee and his colleagues in the electrical engineering department at Ohio State and neurophysiologist Keir Pearson of the University of Alberta. They're working on a six-legged walking machine. The goal is a machine that could move over rough ground, climb steep hillsides, and so forth. It would permit loggers, for example, to work in rugged, roadless terrain.

The daddy longlegs, also called the harvestman, uses its second and longest pair of legs to scan the terrain as it moves along. The legs continuously sweep ahead of the animal in a horizontal motion, tapping the surface the while. The people at Ohio State are interested in the technique because their machine also must be able to scan ahead so as to avoid obstacles.

The designers visualize a walking machine that would carry up to 500 lb and use about a tenth of the fuel consumed by conventional vehicles with wheels or tracks. Fuel would be saved because legged vehicles get better traction than conventional types, Franklin says. Current plans call for a machine that would be controlled by a driver with a joystick and would have two on-board computers to coordinate the movements of its legs.